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RECOLLECTIONS

OF A

FRENCH MARCHIONESS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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FRENCH MARCHIONESS.

CHAPTER I.

The Brigand Marto, or "honor among thieves!"—
The plague at Marseilles—A pilgrimage to Nanterre—A republican coachman—Impudent varlets—Superstitious vagaries—A *pigeon*-house—Classical groupings.

You need not fear that I should take any unfair advantage of the present opportunity to dilate upon the ruins and palaces of Rome. I believe I would a hundred times rather describe the Roman pigeons and buffaloes! At all events I should have the

chance of telling you something new, and I am so nauseated with the pseudo-learning, the pretended enthusiasm, and the continual repetition of our travellers, that I have taken an equal dislike to Guido's and Guercino's Aurora !

I should prefer relating to you the story of a robber, my little Prince, and if you would like to hear the grand story of the Brigand Marto, of whom all the world at Rome in 1721 were speaking, draw near and listen to your grandmother.

Once upon a time there lived in a town of Romagna called Palestrina, an armourer whose name was Domenico Marto ; he used to walk about alone every night after sunset, in the great Square of the Cathedral with a long sword and a brace of pistols in his girdle. He was the brother-in-law of the Barrigel,* and all the sbirri of the prin-

* Le barisel, en Italien, *barigello*, est un officier chargé de veiller à la santé publique, et d'arrêter les malfaiteurs ; Il est le chef des Sbires."

Historiettes de Tallemant des Riaux, pour servir à l'histoire au XVII siècle. Vol. ii. p. 57.

(Translator's Note.)

cipality of Colonna bowed to him on terms of mutual understanding.

It was well known that a rich citizen came, and said to him one night :—"Domenico, here are a hundred ounces of silver which I give you. In half an hour's time you will see two young men pass dressed in scarlet ; you must approach them with an air of mystery and say to them in an under tone, ' Are you not the Chevalier Feltri ? One will answer, ' I am he,' you must stab him with your poinard and to the heart, if you can ;—the other young man is a coward, who is sure to run away and then you will finish Feltri if necessary. You need not be at the trouble of taking refuge in a church ; return quietly home where I will not fail to come to you."

Dominique faithfully executed the instructions of his jealous employer, and no sooner had he returned to his shop than he saw the rich citizen to whose vengeance he had ministered arrive,

" I am very much pleased with what you

have done for me," said he to Dominique, "and here is another purse of a hundred ounces for you to share with the first officer of justice who may come to you."

Soon after, the chief of the sbirri entered the shop on pretence of buying an *espingle*, and without any other explanation, Marto put into his hands the fifty ounces which were to be devoted to the justice of Palestrina, after which the chief Sbirro invited the armourer to come and meet some friends at supper at his house.

They repaired together to his lodgings which adjoined the public prison, and found there as guests, the barrigel and the jailer of the prison of the principality.

"Signor Marto," they said to him, "masses in the Cathedral cost only twelve *taris* each; they say that the Chevalier Feltri has been assassinated—have twenty or so said for the repose of his soul, and let us say no more about it."

The rest of the evening went off pleasantly enough.

It was said, that one day a servant who was unknown to him, came and proposed that he should follow him to the gate of the town, and that there he found an elderly man very well dressed, and accompanied by four servants on horseback ;—this same seigneur said to him ; “ *Maestro Marto*, here are two purses of forty sequins ! I beg of you to come up to my château, but I hope you will not refuse to be blindfolded.’

“ Willingly,” replied the other, and after an hour’s walking they arrived at the old château of the Duke of Andria, as was some time afterwards discovered.

The bandage which covered the eyes of the Bravo being removed, he found himself in a splendid room, where was a young woman bound in an arm chair and gagged, so that she could only give utterance to suppressed cries.

The old *Seigneur* said to him ; “ *Mio Bravo*, I must tell you that my servants are nothing more than milk-sops, and you must be aware that my arm is no longer vigorous

enough to strike a decisive blow—therefore have the goodness to stab my wife.”

Domenico answered :

“ *Eccellenza*, you have been deceived in me ; I lay in wait for people who can defend themselves, at the corners of streets, or I attack them boldly in the wood, but I will not put to death a *Signora* who is fast bound in a velvet chair, and gagged to boot !—that is the part of an executioner, and by no means befitting a man of honour ;” and upon this, Domenico threw the two purses at the feet of the revengeful husband.

The latter dared not resist—(such an indiscretion would have been unseemly ;) he begged the armourer to allow himself to be blindfolded again, and then had him led back to the gate of the town ; Domenico Marto acquired much honour, and many friends, by this delicate and noble action, but there was another of his which was still more generally approved of.*

* Popular clamour went so far as to affix names to the actors concerned in this affair ; the jealous hus-

In the two cities of Palestrina and Galliano there were two rival families, and two men of rank who could not bear one another; these were, the Cirulli, (who were sprung from a cup-bearer of the Constable Pompey Colonna, Prince of Palestrina) and the Serra d'Ognano, who were descended from an incense-bearer of Pope Martin V. (Otho Colonna).

The Count Cirulli sent for Dominique and offered him five hundred sequins if he would assassinate the Marquis d'Ognano. The worthy armourer undertook to do it, but said he must have time, because he knew the Marquis was on his guard.

Two days afterwards the Marquis himself sent for Domenico Marto, to a very unfrequented and retired spot.

band they said, must have been Tiberio Caraffa, Duc d'Andria, Comte de Montecalvo and Prince of the Academy of the *Otiosi* of Naples, and the name of his wretched wife was Amélie Imperiali de Francavilla—at all events this Duc d'Andria could never more leave his domains in Sicily, as the Roman and Neapolitan tribunals had condemned him to death in 1718.—(*Author's Note.*)

“ My friend,” said he to him ; “ here is a purse of five hundred sequins for the figure of St. Marc of Venice ; it is yours—but promise to stab Cirulli.”

Domenico took the purse and replied :

“ Sir Marquis, I give you my word of honour that I will kill Don Fabio Cirulli, never mind by what means ; but I must tell you of one thing, that I have already pledged my word to him that I would kill your Excellency.”

“ I hope you will do no such thing now,” replied the Marquis smiling, but Marto answered him seriously.

“ Pardon me, your Excellency—I have promised, and I am going to do it immediately.”

The Marquis D'Ognano would have drawn his sword but the armourer took a pistol from his waist and blew out the Marquis's brains ; he then, without loss of time presented himself before the Count to whom he announced that his enemy had ceased to breathe.

The honourable gentleman was greatly pleased ; he embraced Marto on both cheeks, made him drink some of his Syracusan wine and some Lacryma-Christi of the best year—presented him with a beautiful blade of Damascus steel, and lastly fulfilled his obligation of the five hundred sequins.

Dominique then began to inform him, his manner evincing some little confusion, that the Marquis d'Ognano, likewise, had promised him five hundred sequins (which he had paid before he died), to assassinate the Count. The Cirulli said to the armourer, he was delighted to have been before-hand with his enemy.

“ Sir Count,” replied the conscientious cut-throat, “ that will not avail you, for I gave my word of honour !” and saying this, he stabbed him twice to the heart, with his stiletto.

The Count's servants rushed in at the cries which he uttered in falling, but Marto got rid of them, thanks to his poignard, and fled to the mountains of Benevento,

whither all the brigands of Italy came and flocked around him.

This was considered so honorable an action, that it became the subject of general conversation at that time ; the bandits are the heroes of the people all over the south of Italy, and I think that in the Romagna Emiliana, and Flaminiana, they will always remember the Bravo Domenico Marto.*

On our return through Provence, we were prevented seeing Monsieur de Marseilles, who scarcely ever quitted his episcopal Town and he had recommended us not to tarry there until the atmosphere was entirely free from all plague.

* An anonymous writer has printed a part of this anecdote in 1819, without any Author's name, and without giving himself any further trouble than that of changing the names of the actors and of the town.

It is pretty well known that the two little works attributed to this anonymous person have been copied in a Manuscript entitled "*Memoires inédits du Comte de Cagliostro.*" The Editor of the *Souvenirs de la Marquise de Crèquy* has already protested against this abuse of confidence.—
(*Editor's Note.*)

Fifty thousand souls had perished in Mar-
seilles, that is to say, about half the popula-
tion of this great city ; almost all the priests
and the members of other religious orders
who attended upon the sick, had fallen vic-
tims, either through excess of fatigue or
from infection.

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Madame de Marsan,* who used often to accompany me to church, called for me one day to go and drink water at the wells of Sainte Geneviève at Nanterre, it being the fête of her patron-saint, for her name likewise was Génévieve ;—accordingly we started in her gilt vis-à-vis, half the time saying our *pater-nosters*, the rest, diverting ourselves at the idea of our pilgrimage, for she said we must not wipe out the iron mug in which they drank the water of the well of St. Gènéviève ; it was chained to the fountain—but above all we must not

* She had been Governess to the Royal children—the Pavillon de Marsan at the Tuileries was named after her.

leave one single drop at the bottom of the mug, which held at least half a pint. I rebelled at these injunctions, but the good Princess urged the impropriety of hurting the prejudices of the ignorant, so I promised to abide entirely by her experience and direction.

This water is a sovereign remedy for bad eyes I must tell you, but we had nothing of that kind the matter with us ; when we came in sight of the fountain it was surrounded by such a number of villagers and country people that it was impossible to get near it ; whereupon we alighted from the carriage, and in a fit of modesty which was charming to behold, we stood on one side.

Guess whom we saw arrive to pay her devotions ? Madame du Deffand who never believed in anything ! and the Chevalier de Pont-de-Vesle, assisted by several lacqueys, opened a passage for her.

She was nearly blind, and her Cavalier did not see a bit better than herself, so this grand drinking was not for them as it was

for us, a mere precautionary measure. We had the satisfaction of seeing them each swallow exactly and scrupulously a full mug of this blessed water ! We felt pretty certain that they would not go and boast of the act in their philosophical circles, and we determined that we ourselves would not mention it, that we might not afford any subject for joking on a devotional exercise, and especially to avoid any remarks being made upon these two strange pilgrims, for whom the charitable feelings of Madame de Mar-san were alarmed beyond measure.

It was in vain that I told her that this Madame du Deffand had not much to lose in point of public estimation, or personal consideration, adding that the intimacy which existed between her and Pont-de-Vesle, had been for a long time food for scandal.

“ It would be the means of preventing their pilgrimages for the future and of their ever putting their feet in a church again,” was her reply, and certain it is, we

kept it a profound secret except from the Duke of Penthièvre, to whom we told everything, and who was secrecy itself.

He was very much amused at the pilgrimage of these two philosophical encyclopaediac-lovers to preserve the fine eyes of Madame du Deffand by the suffrages and through the mediation of the blessed Gèneviève of Nanterre ! If their friends Alerbert and Holbach had ever heard of it, what a choke-pear it would have been for them !

The servant of Madame de Marsan who wore the colours of Lorraine and Jerusalem, were confounded at our humility and quite shocked to see us forestalled by Madame du Deffand ; the Princess's first footman came and offered to have the competitors put aside that we might the sooner obtain possession of the mug, but we answered that we had no laborious duties to attend to, at home or abroad, as those good people had, and we ordered them to leave them alone.

The pride of our servants was deeply wounded, and drove them very nearly into open rebellion against us ; I ought to add that Madame de Marsan's coachman who drove us to Nanterre, was envenomed against me to such a degree that he refused to enter my service.

“ With whom did you live last ?” said I to him, (naturally enough) when he presented himself before me.

“ Madame, I lived with Monseigneur l' Abbè Duc de Biron, but he is gone to Heaven !”

“ If he is gone there,” said I, thinking aloud, “ he will not stay long !” whereupon the coachman looked daggers at me. He told me that he was a gentleman ; so were nearly all the valets of the Hôtel de Biron.

I replied that it was no degradation to wear the livery of the De Crèquy's and told him to go up stairs to my steward to settle about his wages.

“ But,” said he, “ before going to engage myself, I should like to know from

Madame to whom Madame gives precedence ?”

“ To everyone ! I give precedence to everyone except in the streets and courts of Versailles !”

“ What ? would Madame order her first coachman to allow the wives of Presidents to pass her in the streets of Paris ?”

“ Eh ! undoubtedly, and with more reason, because I go and sup every Thursday in their *quartier* of the *Marais* !”

“ But surely Madame would not allow *financières* to precede her, and Madame must be aware that if their servants tried to pass, it would be for Madame’s coachman to strike them in the face with his whip.”

“ Oh, people of that kind ought to be able to distinguish liveries, and moreover *Monsieur le Cocher*, I do not understand having my carriages overturned and my people crushed, or at least my horses lamed, in order to keep up in the streets with people of no consequence whatever.”

“ It is true that Madame has but twelve horses ; but hitherto I have been accustomed

to give place to Princes of the Blood only, so I shall not suit Madame."

He went off furious.

Madame de Marsan took him into her service with the entire satisfaction of both parties ; he was the one who was inciting on our footmen to rebel, saying that we were disgracing ourselves and that we must have agreed to do it that we might bring contempt upon, and mortify, the livery servants who had the honours of the Louvre.

No scene in any play was ever like this ; if it had not been for fear that we should have them consigned to the Fort l'Evêque they certainly would have left us alone on the high road.

The especial cause of their exasperation was, that they had had the humiliation of seeing the servants of Monsieur de Pont de Vesle pass before them, and he, as they contemptuously observed, was a *bourgeois*.

The most curious part of the story is, that this Coachman who was such a stickler for the privileges of the "Honours of the

Louvre," ended by becoming one of the most enthusiastic of the revolutionary radicals, and one of the most conspicuous orators of the section of "*Les Droits de l'Homme.*"

The citizen Girard made his first appearance in the republican government as commissioner of supplies ; after that he became president of the committee of enquiry, and lastly he was public Prosecutor to the Revolutionary tribunal in 1793. I saw in the Newspapers that he had been guillotined for being an *Orléaniste* or a *Fédéraliste*, I forget which.

Whilst he was anticipating his future career on the *pavé* of Nanterre, holding the reins of a vis-à-vis with seven windows, and exciting our footmen to rise against us, we had arrived at the brink of the well, where I swallowed my ration of Holy Water with most perfect docility.

Next, we thought of going and saying our prayers in the parish Church of Nanterre by the relics of the saint, and now our affairs

began to take a serious turn, for it may be readily supposed that this was the real object and reasonable motive of our journey, so we proceeded towards the Church with those feelings of deep affection, and that sentiment of confidence and tenderness which I have always experienced for the holy and venerable Patroness of Paris.

In my opinion there is something peculiarly touching in the devotion of the inhabitants of Paris towards Ste. Gènèviève ; like some child that we have all known, one would say that she had died but yesterday ; and yet, she was but a lowly, simple, village girl ; there was no reason for flattering her whilst living, or for unduly exalting her memory when dead. There was such simplicity of intention, so much that was straightforward and ingenuous in the chronicle of her life.

One sees that the foundation of this legend is authentic and incontestably true ; and then this tomb—before which Sicambic

chiefs* and long-haired kings have knelt ; these venerated bones, on which magistrates, people, and French princes have gazed for centuries ! In short, all these traditions of our old Paris, all these memorable acts of charity, and the miraculous facts which are registered in profane history, possess this characteristic, that, at least, they have never been contradicted, nor been called in question by other sects : thus we may really say that the softness and humility of Sainte Gèneviève have disarmed the enemies of the faith.

The Church of Nanterre was so full, that we sent for the sacristans to ask, if they could not place us in the vacant space by the side of the reliquary.

“ Ah, Mesdames ! no one is admitted now within the sanctuary ! the dean has forbidden

* Sicambri—a people originally from Spain ; they afterwards fled into Italy and ultimately settled in Sicily. From this race sprang the Franks. “*Feroces Sicambri Hor. Od. 4.*—(Translator’s Note.)

us to allow ladies of the Court to approach the relics ; and no doubt you are aware that Madame de Crèquy stole from us last year a piece of the real cross !”

“ Madame de Créquy, did you say ?”

“ Indeed, it was, ladies ; she stole from the altar a piece of the real cross !”

I went off into a fit of laughter, and Mme. de Marsan asked what made them suppose that Madame de Créquy stole the relic ?

“ We were quite sure of it, Madame ; she came here in her carriage and six, which, had a red top to it ;* her servants were dressed in yellow with red lace, and there were two other servants present, who told us that it was Madame de Crèquy !.....She was at least, double your height.”

“ You perceive, whispered the Countess to

* The roof of the carriage in crimson velvet was an outward sign of the honours of the Louvre, as well as the *daïs* erected in the drawing-room, the ermine mantle displayed over the coat of arms, &c. &c.

me, looking quite dismayed, "that this must have been the Maréchale de Noailles, for this is the only kind of theft the wretched woman ever commits!"

I remember that the Maréchale de Noailles had actually been accused of several felonies of the same sort; but it was notorious that she *filched* (as people would say) a little Jeanne de Chantal! She had borrowed this relic from the Sisters of the Visitation, who could never induce her to restore it; it was afterwards discovered that the unfortunate creature had employed it as a means to effect the cure of her son, the Duc d'Ayen, who had the measles, and that the relic had been diluted in his medicine, after having been pounded in a mortar, under the superintendence of the Maréchale herself!

However the case may be, our colours and honours were the same; so that coachmen less learned than Monsieur Girard, or servants lounging at the church door, might very easily mistake her carriage for mine. Some time afterwards it became known that

the Maréchale had really committed the theft at Nanterre, because she was determined to have some stolen relic in her possession at whatever risk.

I cannot say what superstitious fancy of hers this was to satisfy, or for what purpose it was intended, but it was just according to the whim of the moment. The Archbishop sent his proctor to the Hôtel de Noailles, and the Maréchale gave as her reason, that she had need of a stolen relic, and that she preferred taking upon herself the responsibility of the theft, than expose any one else to the penalty of sacrilege.

It was on this occasion that the Archbishop of Paris and the Bishop of Chartres thought it a necessary precaution to withhold the communion from her, which was generally disapproved of, because they did not choose the real motives to be noised abroad.

The relations of the Maréchale were extremely displeased at this sacramental interdiction ; but had they known the real state

of the case they certainly would have felt grateful for this pastoral charity, and for the delicacy and attentive solicitude of the two prelates.

Those who lived on intimate terms with the Maréchale de Noailles entertained no doubt as to her sanity, and that she carried on an epistolary correspondence with the Holy Virgin and the Patriarchs. She used to deposit her epistles on the top of a pigeon-house at the Hôtel de Noailles, and as she always found answers to her letters, it was supposed that her almoner wrote them; he was the celebrated Abbé Grisel.

She was sometimes a little shocked at the familiar tone in which the Virgin Mary addressed her :

“ *My dear Maréchale*—and at the third line,” she would say, looking half sour, and half sweet, “that is certainly rather familiar for a little nobody from Nazareth—however, we must take into consideration that the Virgin was descended from the royal family of David ; I have always thought” said she

to the Duchesse de Lesparre, "I have always thought that St. Joseph must have been the issue of some younger branch, whom misfortune or injustice had reduced."

The Maréchale de Noailles was always in quest of all the superstitious and ridiculous ideas that she could discover ; she was persuaded that the fairy Messulina never failed to appear at the foot of her bed every time that any descendant of the said Messulina, or of Count Geoffry, *à la Grand'dent*, her husband, was about to die. But what was really curious about it was, that the Maréchale correctly prophesied the death of forty or fifty persons, by means of these warnings as she said—you must explain this as you please but it is an authentic fact.

The Abbess of l'Abbaye-aux-Bois, who was a person of piety and wisdom, had a charming story of the Maréchale de Noailles ; she was informed that she often came to her church, when every one was at dinner ; they watched the pilgrim, and discovered that she addressed interminable harangues to the sta-

tue of the Holy Virgin, with whom she seemed to have entered into a controversy, and sometimes she even quarrelled with it.

One day she came and stood before the Altar of Our Lady, making all sorts of obsequious curtesies, and performing little civilities without end. The object of her prayer that day was, that the Marshal de Noailles, husband of the petitioner, might obtain, first, eighteen hundred thousand francs, of which he stood in need at the moment ; next, the Order of the Garter, which he most devoutly coveted, because it was the only distinguished decoration that had not been in his family ; and, finally, a diploma of a Prince of the Holy Empire, inasmuch, as a princely qualification was the only hereditary title of which he was not possessed.

Suddenly, a small sweet voice was heard which spoke as follows :

“Madame la Maréchale, you will not have the eighteen hundred thousand francs which you want for your husband ; he has

already an income of a hundred thousand crowns, and that is pretty well!—He is already a Duke and a Peer, a Grandee of Spain, and Marshal of France; he already possesses the collar of the Holy Ghost and that of the Golden Fleece; your family are overwhelmed with court favours, so if you are not contented, it is because it is impossible to satisfy you; and I advise you to give up the idea of becoming a Princess of the Empire!—Neither will your husband have the Garter of St. George!”

This extravagant Maréchale was not the least surprised, nor confounded.....then came a burst of laughter.....it was the little De Chabrilan, who was a wag, and had hidden himself behind the altar.*

The most extraordinary idea of the Marè-

* Henri de Moreton, Vicomte de Chabrilan, first page to the Queen, and musqueteer of the guard. He was a nephew of Madame de Canaples, coadjutrix, which accounts for his intimacy at the Convent.

chale's was, having all her little nephews painted by Boucher, all in the same picture, as cupids, and of course completely naked, with fillets on their heads and flambeaux in their hands, besides quivers and wings, in short, all the usual mythological appendages, and the proper paraphernalia of little loves ! But as it would not have been right to represent the children of the house of Noailles as vulgar divinities, common loves and plebeian cupids, each little fellow had on his breast the plastron of Malta, in order to shew that they were born Grand Crosses of the Order ! In the back ground of the picture, a scroll displayed on a piece of architecture, informed you that the mother of all these loves was a Venus, and that she was the last of the House of Arpjaon. Another of these cupids appeared as a *Grand Bailli* of Malta, and bore at the end of his arrow a pendant, on which were inscribed the initials of the device of the Order, F.E.R.T., *Fortitudo Ejus Rhodum Tenuit*, (*Their valour preserved Rhodes.*)

Anything more heterogeneous was never beheld, and the Noailles laughed at it in all directions! It is to be remembered that the Noailles were people of good ability and better taste, with the exception only of the Prince de Poix, who never possessed either one or the other!

CHAPTER II.

Madame d'Egmont—Romance of Real Life—Maréchal de Richelieu, the hard-hearted Father—The Handsome Count—A Dutch-built Husband—A Calumniated Woman—The Vidame de Poitiers—The Abbè Cochin (qy. *Coquin*)—*Rus in Urbe*—A Solemn Fool—Strange interview—"Happy Returns."

As I have introduced you to my oldest and best friend, Madame de Marsan, I should now wish you to become acquainted with my last and dearest friend, Madame d'Egmont. Notwithstanding the difference between the dates, and the difference in their ages and characters.

No one was ever more perfectly sensible, or more highly esteemed than Madame de Marsan, nor was any one ever more thoughtless, or more unjustly calumniated than Madame d'Egmont ; but it must be admitted that she gave some cause for it, by her romantic, absent manner, and above all, by the haughty and mortifying air with which she ever treated tiresome people ; you cannot imagine the animosity which was excited against this charming young woman by her reserved and silent manner.

Sophie Septimanie de Richelieu was the only daughter of the Maréchal de Richelieu, and of the Princess Elizabeth of Lorraine, heiress of the Guises.

I will not undertake to give an exact description of this fascinating person, because she defies description, and she was, as I may say, the very personification of France in the olden time. She was a happy mixture of the charms of intellect and finished politeness ; her mode of expression was perfect, and her originality piquante with

exquisite manners ; and yet, under cover of all this elegance, one fancied one could see the germ of approaching death.

The recollection that I have of Madame d'Egmont is that of a sylph, and I always remember her like some delightful dream that is passed. She was tall and well-proportioned ; her eyes were brown, black, or grey, according to the impression of the moment ; never were there such eyes as those for the variety of their expression, or for the magical effect which they produced.

My good grandmother took it into her head that she ought to marry the son of the Marèchal de Belleisle, the Comte de Gisors, who was the handsomest, the bravest, and the most amiable young nobleman of his day.

“ Thank you,” replied the Marèchal de Richelieu to her, “ I have no wish to give my daughter to the grandson of the superintendant Fouquet.”

“ But I tell you that they love, they adore one another.”

“ Well then, they will meet again in the

world—I have no intention of making a Nun of my daughter.”

It was of no avail, and Septimanie was married, in violence to her feelings, to the greatest Seigneur and the fattest gentleman of the Low-Countries.*

The amiable Comte de Gisors was killed with the army, whereupon King Louis the XVth went and paid a visit of condolence to the Marèchal duc de Belleisle his father, and that, they said, was the only consolation which could overcome his paternal affliction, for the Marèchal was by far the vainest and most egotistical of beings.

Madame d'Egmont was idolized by her father; much has been said of the assumed ignorance of the Marèchal de Richelieu, who used to amuse himself by pretending not to understand the simplest things; to be sure

* Casimir-Auguste d'Egmont died in 1786. He was twice previously married and was assuredly the most silent and tiresome husband in the world.

(*Author's Note.*)

he did not know much about geography, and orthography, but his quickness abundantly compensated for his deficiencies.

The Chevalier de Montbarrey told me that the Marèchal was walking one day in the Park of Versailles in the suite of the Dauphiness,* and this Princess asked him, I know not why, what was the difference between the Dryads and the Hamadryads?

“Why Madame,” answered the Marshal who did not know a word about it, “in my opinion it is the same as one would say of the *Bishop* of Auxerre, and the *Archbishop* of Sens there.

The Duke de Nivernois who was a learned mythologist would certainly not have got out of the difficulty with equal sagacity.

Many stories of gallantry have been invented upon the Comtesse d’Egmont; she has been especially named with Rhullières,

* Marie-Josephine de Saxe, wife of the Dauphin Louis IX, mother of Kings Louis XVI, Louis XVIII, and Charles X.

but the real truth is, that after the death of Monsieur de Gisors, she never had but one solitary attachment in which her heart and head were incessantly absorbed, and it accompanied her to the tomb, to which sorrow prematurely brought her.

It is such a romantic story, and yet so well authenticated that whilst half the world refused to believe it, the other half of the public could not doubt it, notwithstanding its improbability, and I found myself among this latter half, in consequence of our intimate relations with the Hotel de Richelieu.

The writers of romances have confused the adventures of Madame d'Egmont with one of the stories of the Duchesse d'Orléans.* The object was a young and attractive gentleman, whom misfortunes had obliged to enter the *gardes-Françaises* as a private soldier, and as he was unaccountably like the Comte de Gisors, but younger and more

* The mother of Louis Philippe Egalité.

agreeable if possible, one might assert, in defence of the ill-fated Comtesse d'Egmont, that this last attachment was a proof of the solidity of her character, and a strong mark of her fidelity to the first object of her affection. As this amiable young man bore an extraordinary likeness in figure and face to Monsieur de Gisors, in his height and carriage even to the sound of his voice, it was supposed that he might have been the son of the same father, but however that may be, here is the story with all its details.

Mademoiselle de Richelieu became then Comtesse D'Egmont with all its advantages, which implies an elevation to the highest position in the aristocracy of Europe ; she lived on good terms with her husband, and that is all.

Whilst they were marrying her to her *Marquis of Carabas*, they had married Mademoiselle de Nivernois to Monsieur de Gisors, who was killed some months after his marriage. Thus, our two lovers never had an opportunity of "meeting one another

again in the world," where hitherto they had only spoken in the language of the eyes, but so present and vivid was Madame d'Egmont's recollection of the Comte de Gisors that the mere mention of his name in her presence would make her faint. The Prince Abbé de Salm thought proper to try the experiment one day at the Hotel de Richelieu; the poor young woman was seized with dreadful convulsions, and all right-minded people forbade this mischievous hunchback to enter their houses. The Maréchal de Richelieu came and paid her a visit a few days afterwards in great state as though nothing had happened, and to show that he thought nothing of it; the good taste of which was fully appreciated.

There lived in the world, (or rather out of the world,) at that time, an old Seigneur of the house of Lusignan, who was called the Vidame de Poitiers. We knew that he *vegetated* in a large house in the Marais, but no one ever saw him, for he was uncouth and eccentric to a degree. Strange things

were told of him, but the principal one was, that if he did not leave his house, it was a *lettre de cachet* that prevented him ; it was even said that if he attempted to go out, he would be sent back to the Bastile, where he had already passed many years, and that the Lieutenant of Police always kept two or three men in his house to look after him.

Ministers and magistrates were silent on the subject of this Vidame, and while I think of it you must let me digress and tell you what the charitable Abbé Cochin (the Curé of St. Jacques-du-Haut-Pas, and the founder of the hospital bearing his name, who was certainly a person of perfect veracity) told me with reference to this extraordinary Vidame.

In his youth, when he was leaving his father's house, (who was an old State-counsellor residing in the Marais,) at five o'clock one winter's evening, he wished to cross the Place de Grève, but found all the approaches obstructed and guarded by soldiers of the

Gardes-Françaises, they saw he was clerical, so the non-commissioned officer let him pass through, making him some sign, the purport of which he could not comprehend.

When he was close to the Hôtel-de-Ville, the great door of which was open, he perceived that there was something going on, and flambeaux flickering in all directions ; his curiosity was excited, and as he was quite at home in the Hôtel de Ville, his family having held office there for many generations, he went up the stairs ; imagine his surprise on seeing in the middle of the court all the preparations for an execution ! He found there seven or eight sinister-looking figures, one of which was an executioner, with his weapon by the side of a block covered with black cloth, and another without any drapery.

There was a profound silence, but soon two handsome young men arrived who were made to kneel down beside the blocks, and great trouble was taken in adjusting their

position according to the directions of the executioner.

The Abbé Cochin, who trembled from head to foot, and who had retreated behind one of the pillars of the arcade which form a sort of cloister round this little court, next saw that these two unfortunate youths only bowed their heads without placing them upon the blocks—the executioner then drew his cutlass and tried the edge with his finger, but instead of cutting off the heads of these two gentlemen, he contented himself with drawing the blunt side of the sword across their necks, and this he did with an air of great importance, after which manœuvre he carefully wiped his great blade, returned it to its scabbard and stood stock still. The two victims remained seven or eight minutes before they were able to imagine that they were at liberty to raise their heads, and then an old magistrate began to read out to them letters of pardon, by which the Abbé Cochin distinctly heard,

that they related to the Prince de Conty and the Vidame de Poitiers.

He escaped from the Hôtel de Ville as best he could, and related his adventure to his young companions at the Sorbonne, which was the way it became noised abroad among his cotemporaries. They said that his father Monsieur Cochin was sent for next day by the Cardinal de Fleury who enjoined him to order his son to hold his tongue, seeing that the punishment he had witnessed concerned the honour of the Royal Family, and that it was in consequence a state secret.

At that time the Abbé Cochin lived in the seminary of St. Sulpice, and he was allowed a double louis a month for pocket-money by his family, which he spent in charity. Amongst the recipients of his alms was a poor mother of a family, whom the Abbé found on one holiday at the gate of the seminary, where she was waiting his coming out to beseech his charity, on account of some additional affliction.

It was the end of the month, and the Abbé told her she must wait a few days longer, for the good reason that he had no money. The woman upon this urged the impossibility of the thing, and however little he could give her, it would save her life; the Abbé, looking abashed, protested that he did not possess one farthing! The woman then seemed seized with a fit of inspiration; she exclaimed that he was a Saint, that it was in his power to work miracles, and if he would only take the trouble to feel in his pocket, she was quite assured he would find something that he did not expect, and which would suffice for her immediate wants.

For the sake of peace and quiet, the Holy Abbé was going to turn his pocket inside out, but in fumbling, what should he find, to his great surprise, but three six-franc pieces! He gave them, instantly, to the wretched woman; and then, full of joyful humility, ran to throw himself on his knees in the chapel of the Virgin of St. Sulpice, where

he spent the remainder of the day in thanksgivings for the miraculous gift that had been bestowed on him, and entertaining a holy fear of the power of which he was the depository.

On his entering the seminary he heard an exclamation of "There he is!—There he is!"

"Let us humble ourselves," said he; "let us humble ourselves!",

"Upon my word, Cochin! you have put me terribly out!" cried the companion, who shared his cell with him, and who was waiting for him at the door, "you have left your small-clothes here, instead of mine, in which I had eighteen francs!"

Fancy the disappointment of the young miraculist!

The Comtesse d'Egmont received a letter from the Vidame de Poitiers, beseeching her to take the trouble of coming to see him, as he had an important communication to make to her, and he was not *transportable*, that was the word he employed.

“ Shall I go ?”

“ He must be mad !—do not go to such an old wizard !”

But the Marèchal said to his daughter
“ By all means, fail not to attend his *rendez-vous* !”

It was proposed to send to the Vidame, in the place of Madame d'Egmont, a great girl, a Comtesse de Ste. Aldégonde, but the Marèchal interposed with such a resolute air of authority, that the Comtesse d'Egmont was obliged to make up her mind to go. She has often repeated the extraordinary presentiments she experienced regarding this interview ; however she set off to the Hôtel de Lusignan, which no one knew where to find, as no one ever went or sent there.

Without having anything peculiar outside, this house was a perfect fairy palace, and all-accustomed as Madame d'Egmont was to the elegance of the Hôtel de Richelieu, and the splendour of the Château of her great-uncle the Cardinal, which is unparalleled, she was thoroughly astounded !

The hall and the marble stair-case was adorned with statues and green trees ; the antechambers were filled with servants in full liveries, who were drawn up in two rows ; all the rooms were of unparalleled magnificence, and the whole of the apartments opened into a long and lofty gallery, laid out as a winter garden, and you walked on a carpeting of grass, under an archway of orange-trees, myrtles, and rose trees in blossom, to a sort of little rustic stair-case, the steps of which were made of trunks of trees ; the interstices were filled up with moss, and the balustrade was of rough odd-shaped branches,

The Vidame's gentleman usher, who came to receive Madame d'Egmont, made many excuses on his master's behalf, as he showed her the way. She commenced climbing the little rustic stairs, which presented no difficulties, and then found herself in a sort of loft in a stable, where she saw in a small bed, an old gentleman with a nightcap, sound asleep ; the usher had retired without enter-

ing this loft, and here Madame d'Egmont remained, feeling excessively awkward.

While waiting for the Vidame to awake, she observed minutely the whole arrangements, which were in the most completely rural style ; all the walls were roughly plastered, and there were four or five fine cows at the hay-rack. The furniture of the loft consisted of the bed alone, which had no curtains, but a green blanket and unbleached sheets, two straw-bottomed chairs, as common as those in a church, or a farm house, a little table with a brown looking cloth upon it, and a few articles of the commonest earthenware, but all of the most perfect cleanliness ; further, on the white washed walls there were rustic pictures, nailed at each corner, exactly as they do in the country.

This affectation of village simplicity in the middle of Paris, and in a palace, very much amused the Comtesse d'Egmont, who determined to sit down and wait patiently. At the end of a quarter of an hour, she hazarded a little cough ; after that, she

coughed louder, then, with all her might and main, enough to break a blood vessel ; at last, seeing that it was all to no purpose, she thought it would be a good joke to go off without saying anything to the Vidame's usher, who was waiting for her at the bottom of the stair-case, and who conducted her back to her carriage.

Imagine our surprise, and what shouts of laughter there were at the Hôtel de Richelieu, where we had assembled for the return of Madame d'Egmont ! The Marèchal came in unexpectedly to his daughter's, and then he began to screw up his little mouth and shut his little eyes, which was with him the pathological sign of displeasure.

“ Comtesse d'Egmont ! ” said he in his most hollow and husky voice, “ you ought not, it appears to me, to have acted in that manner, with respect to a person of his rank and age, without saying anything of his being very ill, and I advise you to return to the Hôtel de Lusignan, no later than to-morrow morning.”

“Alas, Monsieur !” she replied , making that soft voice of hers still softer, and turning towards him those lovely eyes, half beseeching and half mischievous, “how am I to wake him ?”

“Speak to his gentleman-usher about it.”

“But what do you suppose he can have to say to me ?”

“In order to ascertain that, you must have the very great kindness to return to his house to-morrow morning, and I confidently hope that you will not fail to do so.”

The Marèchal tried to converse with us on other subjects, but he can never unbend. He left us to start for Versailles, where he was going to take the week’s waiting for one of the first gentlemen of the chamber, who was ill, and would to Heaven that his poor daughter had never gone back to the Hôtel de Lusignan !

Madame d’Egmont was very much annoyed by this new injunction of the Maréchal, and as soon as he was off for Versailles, she told us impatiently that she thought it

was more than he had any right to expect ; that she felt all sorts of objections to it, first of all, because it would be very difficult to prevent herself from laughing in the Vidame's face, with whom she would be in the absurd position of a great lady playing him off like a little girl ; but principally, because she could not divest herself of an awful foreboding, and she experienced a dread, an oppression, a melancholy apprehension, whenever she thought she must return to the Hôtel de Lusignan.

“It seems to me,” she said, “that if I could speak with that unlucky Vidame anywhere but in his own house, I should not be so disquieted ; and you know that I have never been mistaken in my presentiments !” At last, she wound herself up, and her feelings were so keenly penetrated, that hot tears gushed forth, and I went and found her husband, who was in his library, at his constant occupation of turning over the leaves of his collection of briefs and bulls,

with his dissertation on the Decretals and the histories of the Councils.

Had I been Margaret of Austria, the Infanta Isabella-Clara-Eugenia, the Stadtholderess of the Low Countries—had I been Mary of Burgundy herself, the Comte d'Egmont could not have received my visit more ceremoniously, or with more obsequious embarrassment. First of all, he would not hear of my remaining in the library with him; he rang all the bells to have all the folding doors thrown open; he had no gloves on, this formal gentleman, so he took care to offer me his hand under the skirt of his coat; and we traversed I don't know how many rooms before we arrived at the drawing-room, where his canopy was, and on which I was obliged, whether I would or no, to take up my position, whilst he would only occupy a lower seat.

I had great difficulty in keeping my countenance; it was like a scene in a play where some little personage is enthroned for

the time being! I trembled lest any one should come in, for I should have burst into a fit of laughter! Think of the scandal of such a thing, and my consequent fear!

I informed him, however, that his wife was in despair at having to return to the Vidame de Poitiers, that the Marèchal de Richelieu never would have the heart to insist upon it, if he saw the state in which I had left her, and that he, Monsieur d'Egmont, ought to interfere with the command of the Marèchal, to delay this unaccountable visit to the Hôtel de Lusignan until the return of his father-in-law, with whom there would be plenty of time to enter into an explanation.

"Madame La Marquise," replied the Comte d'Egmont, with sententious and marked gravity, as though he were addressing the Supreme Council of Brabant, I feel acutely your extreme kindness to the Comtesse d'Egmont, and I am not the less sensible of the trouble you have been good enough to take in coming here to afford us

a fresh proof of it. It is, surely, highly to be desired that the Comtesse d'Egmont should be spared any annoyance respecting this visit to the Hôtel de Lusignan, the motive or utility of which, I confess my inability to comprehend any more than yourself, Madame la Marquise, or any more than the Comtesse d'Egmont ; but still it appears to me no less desirable, that the Marèchal de Richelieu should have no cause for reproaching us for not having carried into effect those intentions, which he expressed to his daughter in your presence, and I do not perceive how we can reconcile to ourselves the abandonment of this injunction of his, until after his return to Paris ; his return to Paris must infallibly necessitate a delay of a week, during which week we should incur the continued apprehension that the Vidame might die without having been enabled to speak with the Comtesse d'Egmont !”

I could gain nothing from this wordy man, and next day we learnt that he had gone off

to pass a week at the Ile-Adam with the Prince de Conty, so you see his policy was at least as good as his eloquence was great.

Good Heavens! what a number of presentiments I have seen realised! If you have ever a strong presentiment do not despise or neglect it, my dear child!—it may be dangerous or even culpable to do so, for what do we know, or how can we tell who ought or ought not to yield to their influence? It is remarkable that no one ever had a presentiment which led to the breach of any conscientious or religious duty, and as those kinds of foresight have always reference to something beyond the power of precept, I do not see why we should not attend to their warning.

Further on you will see the forebodings I had, and how I resisted taking any part in the fêtes of the City of Paris on the occasion of the marriage of Louis XVI, but my obedience led me on, and I was very nearly crushed in the Place de Louis XV, after having been overturned on the Pont-au-

Change on going home from the banquet at the Hôtel de Ville ;—but let us return to Madame d'Egmont.

Her father came back from Versailles, and told her among other things that the Vidame had rendered him in old times, at the period of his early youth, so signal a service, that he might say he had saved both his honour and his life. He added that if Monsieur de Poitiers had asked to see him himself, he should not have failed to have paid the greatest attention to his wishes, but doubtless it was through delicacy and discretion, and to avoid bringing any discredit on the Maréchal, that he did not communicate more directly with him.

The Maréchal had no doubt but that his old friend had something that he wished him to hear—perhaps some service to ask of him.

“ Return therefore,” said he to his daughter, kindly but firmly ; “ he has certainly some advice which he wishes should reach me ; he was a brave and generous fellow !

Fifty years ago he was the most amiable person living, and I cannot think of the additional proof of devotion which he is now giving me, without feeling it sensibly."

The Comtesse d'Egmont determined to return to the Vidame de Poitiers, whom she found still in his stable ; he seemed to be in great pain, but his strength appeared to revive when he saw her, and, no-ways embarrassed by what he had to tell her, he proceeded in the following methodical manner.

After the first compliments of excuse, and his most respectful thanks, but without making any allusion to Madame d'Egmont's first visit, (which she took the trouble of paying when he was asleep, and without having awoke him !) he had a casket brought to him, from which he extracted some papers, begging her to read them.

These were letters from the late Comte de Gisors, addressed to the Vidame, which bore witness to their mutual friendship, as well as to the entire confidence and respectful

esteem which this honourable young man entertained for the said Monsieur de Poitiers. There was repeated mention of Madame d'Egmont in all these letters, and he spoke of her with such tenderness, that her heart, poor woman, was full to bursting. He complained of the inhuman conduct of his father, the Maréchal de Belleisle, with regard to a poor child whom he had abandoned to his wretched lot, and whom his son recommended to the Vidame with the deepest anxiety.

“ I shall never return from this campaign where I am determined to seek my death,” said he in his last letter ; “ but I recommend Séverin to you, and then, as far as he is concerned, I shall die in peace.”

When the Countess had read all these letters and wept over them for nearly an hour, she dried her eyes, and the old Seigneur for the first time opened his, he having kept them closed all the time without uttering a single word.

“ Madame,” he then said to her, “ he

whom we regret so much, and for whom you weep, had no secrets from me, and I had all the feelings of a parent for him ; he has left his second-self to us, a young man about his own age, whom he loved as a brother ; he is without fortune, and I only possess an annuity, for I sold my estates long ago, and even this house is not mine ; I shall always take care, though, that he has a share of my personal property, and I intend to leave him my plate and jewels, which are worth at least seventy thousand crowns ; but for reasons which I can hardly explain to you, and to which it appears to me unnecessary to call your attention, I should very much wish that it should not be known that this young man has been on such intimate terms with me, or that he has become my legatee. I therefore beg of you to accept in trust for him a legacy of twenty thousand pistoles, which I desire to bequeath to him, and for which I must request your permission to allow yourself to be named in my will."

He added, that since the death of the Comte de Gisors, this young man who was called Monsieur de Guys, had found himself deserted by the Maréchal de Belleisle, whose natural son they supposed him to be ; that he had fallen into the deepest despair, and that in spite of all Monsieur de Poitiers could say or do to tranquillize him, he had gone and entered himself in the Gardes-Françaises, where, however, his conduct had given complete satisfaction.

“ He is supposed,” continued the dying man, “ to be the legitimate son of a Chevalier de Guys, who died last year, and who commanded the cruisers at Belleisle-en-mer ; with the seventy thousand crowns which I am going to leave him, he will not be a burden to any one, and all that I ask of you is, the honour of your protection for him.”

There was no mention made of that of the Maréchal de Richelieu, but Monsieur de Poitiers was discreet enough to leave that to be understood. He said nothing that

implied that they had been acquainted formerly.

Madame d'Egmont, whose sins had hitherto been those of omission, or of thought, perhaps, felt uneasy at the idea of having to reproach herself with an action for which the world might blame her ; she felt with regard to the widowed Comtesse de Gisors, great respect mingled with embarrassment and constraint—she would have to manage the susceptibility of her father, and the *méticulosité* of her husband ; she would have, above all, to keep dormant the jealous pride and fierce vanity of the Maréchal de Belleisle who was Minister of War, and upon whom the present situation and future prospects of the young soldier particularly depended, so whilst she consented to be the Vidame's trustee, she took care to make the following stipulations :

First, that her name of Comtesse D'Egmont should not be mentioned in the will as being the legatee of the testator, but that of the Curé of St-Jean-en-Grève who was

her confessor, and who would remit to Monsieur de Guys the twenty thousand livres, which he might draw either from the Hôtel de Ville or the Clergy, which ever he pleased.

Secondly, that the young man in question should have no knowledge whatever of her having had any concern either in receiving the money in trust for him, or in handing it over to him.

Thirdly, that she agreed to deliver the title-deeds into his own hands, after the death of the Vidame, in his behalf, as he desired, but on condition that it should be in the presence of the Curé either at the parsonage of St. Jean or in any other place that she might appoint where she should take care to send for him without his knowing that she was Madame d'Egmont.

You see that the poor Countess neglected no precaution in order that she might not have any other communications with young Sèverin than what were strictly necessary,

and if it happened otherwise, at all events it would not be her fault.

The Vidame de Poitiers died five or six days afterwards, and the Queen of Portugal had died some weeks before, so there was a funeral service to be performed for her at Notre Dame. I found myself obliged to attend in the suites of *Mesdames, Filles de France*, although thank Heaven ! (be it said without pride) I had most assuredly no sort of appointment at the Court of King Louis XV.

As there was a probability that Madame Adelaide would be affianced to the Prince of the Brazils, heir to the little crown of Portugal (a circumstance which afforded no satisfaction to this Royal young lady,) it was thought proper that *Mesdames* should attend the obsequies of Her Most Faithful Majesty, and as their households had not yet been formed, several ladies of rank were chosen to accompany them there, and I was selected by the King to perform the duty of Lady-in-waiting to Madame Louise de France, the

same who is at this present moment a Carmelite in the Convent of St. Denis.

The Comtesse d'Egmont told me that to please her husband she was obliged to attend this grand funeral ceremony, where her rank as a grandee of Spain gave her right to take her seat in the first row with the wives of our Dukes and Peers; but the bench reserved for the Duchesse was almost empty; there was only a great, shapeless, badly-made-up bundle which they supposed might contain Madame de Mazarin; next to that a sort of stiff immoveable poker, which ought to have been Madame de Brissac, and then a little bat who kept continually fluttering about, and who stamped all the time of the service, which convinced us that it was the Comtesse de Tessé.

There was nothing there at all like Madame d'Egmont; I had previously told my Princess that she could not mistake the Countess when she saw her make her graceful and noble curtsey in the middle of the nave

and choir of Notre Dame, but as it was we had a complete disappointment.

Madame d'Egmont, making her curtsey in full dress was a most extraordinary performance ; I wish her picture could have been taken in the act of bowing to the Altar or the Royal Pew at the Chapel of Versailles, for I never saw but two women who bowed as well as she ; one was Queen Marie-Antoinette, and the other (saving the respect due to the Queen of France) Mlle. Clairon of the Comédie-Française.

After the ceremonies of the absolution in which Princesses, and other women of rank never take part, we were informed on entering the Archbishop's Palace, that Madame d'Egmont had been taken ill in the middle of the Church, that she had uttered a piercing shriek and fainted away.

I found her at my house where she was waiting for me ; she was as white as a sheet, and had not yet taken off her mourning attire ;—she could hardly speak, and all that I could get from her was, that in ap-

proaching the *catafalque*, to make her curtsy to it before taking her seat in the choir, she thought she saw the Comte de Gisors in uniform and under arms.

“ They carried me senseless to the sacristy,” said she, “ they revived me by sprinkling holy water over me, and here I am. Do not laugh at me—I saw him I am certain, and I am more dead than alive !”

I answered, that Monsieur de Nivernais had told me before of a young soldier in the Guards who was so like the late Monsieur de Gisors, that you might mistake one for the other, and no doubt it was the same soldier who happened to be standing sentry at the *Catafalque*.

“ Alas !” she exclaimed, trying to suppress her sobs, “ do you not see that it must be his brother, young Séverin, to whom I have to remit the legacy of Monsieur de Poitiers ? I have promised to do it, therefore I must see him once more, but I am terrified at the idea—in short I am wretched !”

We both wept bitterly, for I never could

refrain from tears when I saw her in affliction, but at that moment the Maréchal de Maillebois was announced, with the Comtesse de Gisors and the Duc de Nivernais their father ; we had hardly time to dry our eyes, and we swallowed our tears as well as we could. Fortunately for us we had not put on any rouge, on account of the ceremony of the morning, or the state of our cheeks would have been perfectly ridiculous.

In those days it was really necessary to choose one's own time for enjoying a *good cry* without its being detected. Suspicious lovers, and jealous husbands did not know how thankful they ought to have been to the rouge, powder and towering head-dresses of their *belles*, and especially to their paniers measuring four ells and a half when spread out !

When a woman in good society received the visit of a gentleman, if she were not old, the doors of the room in which they happened to be were never closed. No visiter ever sat down in our presence except at a

respectful distance, and you never would have seen a gentleman go and install himself on a sofa by the side of a lady. But it is time to return to poor Septimanie, who was dreadfully agitated, and her expressive countenance evinced that she expected, on seeing Madame de Gisors enter, some untoward calamity.

We parted very sadly, and the next day I received a visit from the Curé of St. Jean-en-Grève, who wished to speak to me on an affair of the last importance.

The Curés and notaries of Paris are, as everybody knows, the two most estimable bodies in the kingdom, but this Curé of St. Jean, who was called the Abbé Duhesme was the flower of the flock. The amount of alms that passed through his hands, and the restitutions of stolen property which he had effected, were immense. I made no doubt but that he wished to speak to me of his fair penitent and Monsieur de Poitier's legatee, but it proved that his only business with

me was, to return to me fifty-four francs, ten sols, and a handkerchief worked with the arms of Créquy, which he left with me without any sort of explanation.

CHAPTER III.

A repudiating trustee—"Mens conscia recti"—A generous friendship—Splendid attire—How to preserve pearls—A *tête à tête* to Versailles with no results—A row—The guardsmen—*Le Roi s'avisera*—*Dénouement*—Mysterious disappearance of the hero—Death of the heroine.

FROM this point you will find that I am much less well informed on my subject, and I confess I do not regret the circumstance.

The Abbé Duhesme had refused to administer to the will as a trustee, and his scruples were sufficiently well grounded ; he had consulted Monsieur de Beaumont, his Archbishop, and he had forbidden him, under

pain of suspension, to allow himself to be mixed up in an affair devised to evade the law. Madame d'Egmont was therefore obliged to relinquish the idea of obtaining the assistance of her confessor, whose place she caused to be supplied in the will of Monsieur de Poitiers by another person whose name I never ascertained, because he had stipulated that it should not be known.

The natural heirs of the Vidame, who were the Marquis de Lusignan, the Marquis de Turpin, old Lafayette, &c., offered no resistance whatever, and Madame d'Egmont told me some months afterwards, with considerable embarrassment in her manner, that she had made Monsieur de Guys come to a church, whither she went on foot, without attendants, and plainly attired, in order to put into his hands in paper money the two hundred and twenty thousand livres, the produce of the sale of the Vidame's plate and jewels.

I perceived that she coloured as she told me this, and I thought I saw that she had

still something more that she wished to say to me, but I said nothing to induce any further confidence, because I had no desire to encourage her in her weaknesses ; it would have grieved me to have given her a scolding, besides, it would have been of no avail, now that it was all over.

I merely told her that I was surprised and sorry that she had appointed him to meet her in a church ; she looked down and bit her lips with a nervousness which she could not repress, but I thought I had better turn the conversation, which I did in a dry, off-hand manner, although the effort was painful to me. Madame d'Egmont was not deceived by this little manoeuvre of mine—I saw it in her manner ; she was not the less warm and affectionate when I met her at her father's, but her visits to the Hôtel de Crèquy became much less frequent, and it was five or six months before I heard the name of young Monsieur de Guys mentioned again.

One very stormy night—I remember it

perfectly, it was the eve of St. Louis's Day—I had been supping at the Hôtel de Richelieu, and the Marèchal asked me if I did not intend to pay my court at Versailles on the morrow, and attend the grand dinner? I told him that such was my intention.

“My daughter is going also,” replied he; “which of you two will call for the other?”

I always thought that I was the person he preferred seeing his daughter with; I guessed that the cunning old fellow had discovered that there was some little misunderstanding between us, and fancied that it only required that we should be brought face to face, to procure an entire reconciliation.

Generous minds never harbour personal animosities for any length of time; we looked at each other—his daughter and I—and smiled, agreeing to go together to Versailles in time for mass.

I never saw Madame d'Egmont more brilliant or more beautifully dressed. She had

on a black dress, quietly but handsomely trimmed with a rich and elegant embroidery of nasturtiums, the colour and size of nature, with their leaves of gold ; she wore all the hereditary pearls of the house of Egmont, which were worth at least four hundred thousand crowns, and which were as strictly entailed in the family as a *Majorat* of Castile or a principality of the Empire.

These were the very pearls on which the republic of Venice had lent so much money to the Comte Lamoral d'Egmont, to carry on the war of the Low-Countries against King Philip and the Duke d'Albe, his stadtholder. It is remarkable that of all these pearls there were only two which were spoilt since the 16th century. Monsieur d'Egmont used to say, that to prevent pearls from spoiling, or ever becoming discoloured, it was sufficient to keep them shut up with a piece of the root of the ash. Monsieur de Buffon would not believe this, but the test of it, handed down from generation to generation in an old family, is more to be valued, in

my opinion, than all the arguments of an Academician. Do not forget this receipt of the Messieurs d'Egmont when you inherit the pearls which have descended from the Venetian family of Gradenigo, and which my father bought for fifteen thousand crowns.

What was also magnificent and in excellent taste in these beautiful ornaments of Madame d'Egmont were, the clasps of her bracelets, and necklace, and the band of the aigrette, (where forty pendant pearls of the finest shape and greatest purity were suspended) which were composed of immense jacinths, sparkling, dazzling and of the richest nasturtian colour.

I asked Septimanie why she had put on a black dress on a fête day?

“Because Monsieur d'Egmont wished it,” was her reply, “as he is *Condè-Pariente* of Portugal, and his mourning for Queen Donna Marianna is not yet over.”

As I wished to do honour to your family, and had no desire to look like a Duenna of

the Infante by Madame d'Egmont's side (before whom I always took precedence, because, although we were equals in rank, I had the advantage in age), I had put on a very rich Court dress of brocade embroidered in gold; it was in three shades of blue, the darkest of which was the colour of Lapis-lazuli, which is at present called *œil de roi*; I had the most beautiful flowers of silver lace in the world, and I was at some pains to exhibit all the diamonds of your cygnal crown.* The Queen made me approach her, that she might better see the portrait of the Connétable de Lesdiguières, which I had on my bracelet, and it was decided that it was infinitely finer than any of the twelve Mazarins.†

* This appears to be an allusion to the arms of Créquy, of which the heraldic coronet was surmounted by a silver swan with three necks.

(*French Editor's Note.*)

† These twelve stones of nearly equal size and beauty, had been bequeathed to Louis XIV by

The Commandeur d'Esclots, my uncle, was in consequence so overjoyed, that we had great difficulty in preventing his writing to the Queen to express his gratitude! The good old gentleman had arrived at that time of life when the slightest word from royalty or the least public favor appeared to him of inestimable value!

It seemed to me that Madame d'Egmont had no wish to enter into any explanation with me, for she sent at seven o'clock in the morning to beg I would come and fetch her in a *berline*, that we might be enabled to take one of our maids with us. She gave me to understand that she had not been able to sleep all night—she was ill—

Cardinal Mazarin. The *Convention* never could find any Sovereign of Europe, the Sultan included, who would purchase them. The *Directoire* had deposited them as pledges in Holland, from which Buonaparte withdrew them as soon as he became First Consul. They still composed part of the crown jewels of France up to May 1830, at which period we beheld them for the last time at the *Hôtel du garde-meuble* in Paris. (*French Editor's Note.*)

she was exhausted—but I assure you she had no appearance of this whatever..... We went to the Court together—we breakfasted and had luncheon at Mesdames de Tarente and d'Albret, and finally we took our seats.

The public at Versailles were admitted at one door and went out by another, describing in rapid succession a quarter of a circle around the great table. We were seated on the King's right, near the entrance door, and Madame d'Egmont was next to me, the last on the first row, that is, the nearest to the public.

I heard a sort of confused murmur, carried on from respect in an under tone, and looking up, I saw the officer of the *garde-du-corps* speaking to a soldier who kept his eye fixed on Madame d'Egmont. He was a remarkably handsome young man, dressed as a private soldier, but his intelligent and expressive countenance, his graceful bearing and his hair arranged *à la Létorière* would

have amply satisfied the vainest and most fastidious grandee.

You can have no doubt who this was?—but as Monsieur de Guys was not continually present to my thoughts, and as Monsieur de Gisors was not for ever in my dreams, I was not immediately struck by their resemblance. I gave Madame d'Egmont a look—I could not whisper anything to her on account of our hoops, and the formal distance at which we were placed.....the poor woman was evidently in great trouble—she kept her eyes fixed on the ground and half concealed her face with her fan, (in violation of the etiquette of Versailles, where at that time one never took the liberty of opening one's fan before the Queen, unless it was employed to present something to her Majesty.)

In the mean time this handsome young man remained motionless, lost in contemplation of the beautiful lady with the jacinths taking no heed of the King's presence, and not attending to the officer who kept telling

him to pass on and not persist in stopping up the entrance to the hall, as his standing still obstructed the passage of the public, and the *gardes-du-corps* could not perform their duties.

He would not listen to them—he heard nothing—they were obliged to drag him from the hall, upon which Madame d’Egmont gave utterance to an audible groan which threw me into despair.

The King, who always knew from the police of Paris everybody’s adventures and proceedings, which he kept with the most inviolate secrecy, obeyed the dictates of his noble heart and the generous blood that animated him ; he ordered the officer of his guards to approach :

“ Monsieur de Jouffray,” said he to him, loud enough for us to hear, turning his head and directing his voice towards us, but without looking at Madame d’Egmont, “ I dare say he was quite dazzled at the display—perhaps it was seeing the Queen ?” and as he said this, he bowed to her with a smile.

“ Let the young man go home,” he added ;
“ order them to liberate him, and I thank
you all the same for your zeal.”

Madame d'Egmont breathed freely again,
as though she had been relieved of some
overpowering weight, or from some grievous
pain ; something like her former colour and
expression returned, but there were certain
titterings, of which one saw that she was the
object ; and the Maréchal de Richelieu
darted two or three fierce glances at her.

How long the banquet seemed to me ! and
how I felt for his daughter ! what a situation,
and how distressing for her to have to explain
herself with a person of my character ! I,
whom she feared would always blame her,
and of whose severity she stood in such awe.
Her fault was indeed great, but the friend-
ship I bore her was so strong, that I went
and paid her a shoal of affectionate com-
pliments and the most marked attention to
the enemies of the Richelieu's, and all those
ladies who were supposed not to like
Madame d'Egmont. I was in hopes that

these little devices of mine might turn to her advantage—poor Septimanie !

In getting into our chairs at the foot of the stair-case, under the Vestibule of *Mesdames*, the King's daughters, at the moment that my porters were going to raise mine, which was to go first, I heard a loud voice behind my chair exclaim in tones in which alarm and delight were commingled—

“Is it you ?—Is it really you ?”

I saw no one, and I did not hear Septimanie's reply ; she did nothing but weep, and never said a word to me all the way back to Paris. Fortunately, my maid had fallen asleep whilst waiting for us in the carriage, and so perceived nothing.

I was just going to the Hôtel de Richelieu, the next morning, to see Madame d'Egmont, when her father was announced. He had, doubtless, hoped that my eagerness and surprise would pave the way for explanations, and that I should begin and open the trenches before him, but the Marèchal de Richelieu was not a man with whom I

should choose to speak openly on such matters. Persons of dissolute minds always mistake sympathy in the sorrows of others for participation in their feelings; they cannot understand disinterested benevolence, that virtuous and charitable gratification, to which theologians have given the name of compassion. They can form no idea of any middle course between rigorous austerity on the one hand, and culpable approbation on the other. Severity from virtuous women, and connivance from those who are not so, is what they expect, and all that they know of us.

I talked incessantly of our tiresome lawsuit against the Lejeune's de la Furjonnière, and I made him retreat at the end of half an hour, a few minutes more or less, as I had calculated beforehand. This was badly managed on my part, for he imagined that I had abandoned his daughter to the attacks of Mesdames de Grammont, de Forcalquier, d'Esparbès, etc., who were casting all manner

of aspersions on her, forgetful of my politeness to them at the grand dinner.

They had the insolence to dare to say (and most unjustly I do not doubt) that the Comtesse d'Egmont had had frequent interviews with a handsome young soldier, who took her for some little shop-girl, and that the place of their meeting was the Barrier St. Jacques, etc.....However, certain it is, that Septimanie came and entreated my mediation with her father in favor of young Sèverin, whom the Marèchal de Belleisle had been inhuman enough to have turned out of the *gardes-Françaises*; he wished to make him embark for Senegal, where no European can exist longer than a year.

“Come now, Marquise,” said the malicious Richelieu, sneering at finding me engaged in this unfortunate affair, and triumphing at seeing me come to him, “how about your lawsuit with the Lejeunes de la Furjonnière, who wished to bear a *crequier* of gules on a field of gold?”

“Monsieur,” I replied, “I am one of those unfortunately prejudiced women, who respect their husbands and the name they bear ; I do not understand any jests upon our arms.”

“At all events, Marquise, you appear to keep your own in readiness for action !”

“Have the goodness. Monsieur, not to make those remarks to me ;—you will find out to whom you are speaking, I assure you !”

“But joking apart,” said he, pretending not to have been listening ; “why and wherefore would they have me interest myself about this handsome youth ? they will say, I hope, it was to please my daughter ; but I will not treat my son-in-law as they do bulls in his country ! by putting bells round his horns.”

“You had better put hay round them,” said I, “as people did to protect themselves from the mad bulls of old, and be well assured if you abandon Septimanie to the calumnies of Mesdames such-and-such-an-one,

her husband will defend her, and maintain her superiority against the whole world ! If we leave Monsieur de Guys to the mercy of his father, your unhappy daughter will lose her senses first, and die of grief afterwards ; you will compromise her in the eyes of the world and of her husband, and what will you gain by it ?—they will never see each other again I hope, and she assures me—”

The Maréchale interrupted me, saying ;

“ I give you my word, I pity him exceedingly ! I sent for him here, your young man, and I found that he really was the gentlest, manliest, most amiable, and handsomest youth possible ; come now, tell me, if I gave him some appointment, suppose we say, as trooper in the constabulary, Lieutenant of the *Maréchaux de France*, or, perhaps, secretary to our tribunal of the *Pointe-d'honneur*, what would Monsieur de Belleisle say ? Why, he would see nothing but open war in it ! though, by the bye, he was no great admirer of that in his youth, be it said, without any jealousy !”

As I was quite aware of the dire hatred and deep animosity of these two old courtiers, I saw that the Maréchal de Richelieu would take pleasure in thwarting the Maréchal de Belleisle, by protecting him whom he called "my young man," to whom I had never addressed a syllable in my life!

I perceived that the Maréchal de Richelieu was very glad to have received the request from me, that he might have the excuse of the approbation of a person of consideration, and of one too who would not be accused of having acted lightly. I accepted his offer, and then I consented to see this amiable, interesting, and unfortunate Sevérin at my house! At first, I regretted not having known him sooner, but since that, I have often and deeply regretted ever having known him at all! Monsieur de Crèquy loved him as a son, and my grand-aunts ended by idolizing him.

Alas! some time after the appointment was confirmed, we learnt that he had disappeared in the night from the house where

he lived in the Rue St. Jacques ; but by what accident, or by what means, we were never able to discover, nor was it ever known at whose instigation !

This was my poor Septimanie's death-blow ; she lingered for some years, as long as a ray of hope could sustain her. At last, I saw her consumed by a slow fever, and the torch of life which had been lighted so brilliantly and so fortunately, was extinguished in tears.

I shall never forget the fervency and simplicity of this double attachment ; or the deep-seated affection of these two strange, inexplicable, unheard-of love affairs ; she had found out the secret of being able to dwell with equal intensity, and, as it were, equally-measured attachment, upon two objects entirely different and yet perfectly similar !—on the dead, and on the living—on the renowned and brilliant Comte de Gisors, and on a poor, obscure young man ;—a wretched, forsaken child !

I shall never forget her last moments, when the remembrance of those two loved brothers was united in one ingenuous, tender sentiment of fidelity !

CHAPTER IV.

Some account of Mme. de Pompadour—Mlle. Sublet and her barley-sugar king—A *soirée musicale*—Odd characters—Mischievous Osmond—impanelled in a *fix*—Pretty Poll—Mme. de Blot and her dog—The fat sacristan—Murder will (not always) *out*.

I have witnessed the deaths of my father and my aunts ; I have lost my husband and my eldest grandson—if I sometimes resume my pen after such a succession of afflictions and of painfully overwhelming recollections, it will be as a pastime, to drive away my thoughts. The task which I had set myself has lost its object and is now become devoid

of interest to me—if I have courage to continue, my story will be but unconnected and without arrangement.

Of Madame de Pompadour I have nothing particular to say, except that I never could understand how anyone could think her handsome or pretty; her admirers said that her artlessness and vivacity were charming, but that was probably at the period of her early youth, when the favors that were lavished upon her were unknown, and for this reason I am unable to bear witness to them. My only chance of meeting her was at the Theatres, where I never went, and in Churches, where I fancy she seldom made her appearance; in fact the first time I ever saw her was in the gallery of Versailles on the day of her presentation.

She was a mean little person with eyes verging on blue, but of the dullest expression; her hair was yellow, about the same colour as her skin, so that deep mourning without powder or rouge, was fatal to her

appearance ; her eyelashes were short, uneven and scanty—there were two red marks where eyebrows ought to have been, and her teeth were such as anyone might procure (provided he had courage enough) for about fifty louis the set ! Her hands also were common and dumpy—her feet badly put on and stunted rather than small, absurdly turned out too, like those of an opera-dancer ! In fact this adored-one of the greatest king and handsomest prince in the world, always looked miserable, her face wore an expression of pain, and her words were languid and dispirited.

It is rather remarkable that Madame de Pompadour appeared least at ease when in company with women of character, and this may be said of her from Queen Marie of Poland, down to her tire-woman, Made-moiselle Sublet, who never quitted the Chapel of Versailles except to take her meals, or to go and sleep in the Queen's dressing-room at half-past seven in the even-

ing. Fortunately for her, the Queen never made an evening toilet.

Sometimes we made parties of pleasure to go and surprise her in her nocturnal abode, where her couch was shaded by dried-up box-trees as though in a grove, and under a bower of branches which had been blessed ; she was certainly the most free-and-easy, and the strangest person that ever had the charge of fixing pompons on a crowned head !

Louis the XVth, who was always ready for any joke, said to us one fine evening : “ Let us go and contemplate Mademoiselle Sublet ! ”

“ You will find her,” said the Queen, “ with a bust of your Majesty, which she has modelled in barley-sugar.”

“ That is excellent—we will go and eat it,” replied he.

The Queen pushed me into the room, and I called aloud :

“ Sublet ! the King sends me to ask if

you have not been struck by a *coup-dé-soleil* whilst you were undressing for bed ?”

“ Why, what o’clock is it ? Does the King pass the night with the Queen ?” said the worthy creature, starting up in bed with a bound of joy.

The King, who was behind me, had hold of me by the cuff (*à l’engageante*) and I answered Mlle. Sublet with no slight embarrassment that it was past nine, but beyond that I had not a word to say.

“ Would you believe,” she continued, making the sign of the Cross, “ would you believe it is near six weeks since the King slept here ?”

“ But Sublet,” I enquired, anxious to interrupt her, “ what little chapel is that at your bedside ?”

“ It is a likeness of the King, our master, with all sorts of nick-nacks, between two candlesticks with rose coloured wax-lights in them as you perceive, and draped *à la Sultane*, with perfumed silk. I used formerly to place superb bouquets there,

but in truth I am too angry with him now ! you see that there is not a single little flower in those two medicine phials ?”

“ It is quite true,” I replied.

“ Last autumn I put there, two *pommes d'api* one on each side of his little bust, but I took them away and made the little Marchais eat them, on account of that blue ribbon of the Marquis de Marigny.”

I was on thorns, as may easily be supposed.

“ You see that fine orange, do you not ? I took it from the grand side-board on purpose to place it before him ! Very well !” she continued, with an expression of great rage, “ I shall finish by eating it if he goes on in this manner ! I shall eat it before his very eyes and nose ! I will eat your orange,” she pursued, apostrophising her barley-sugar king, and she set her teeth and gesticulated with her fists.

She was in such a transport of exasperation, that I fully expected her to mention a certain person's name, and I turned hastily

away in the direction of their Majesties, who had already preceded me to the drawing-room ; I there found the poor Queen, her eyes red with weeping, and her heart full ; the King seemed to us in unusually low spirits, but without any appearance of anger.

“ I must beg you to allow me to retire to my oratory ;” said the Queen in accents of ineffable sweetness, “ as I wish to attend the communion to-morrow morning.”

The King kissed her hand and pressed it to his bosom ; the expression of his eye softened as he looked upon her, and taking especial care to inform her, that he should sup with her the following evening, without fail, he then betook himself to Madame de Pompadour, who for the last two or three months had lived in the palace.

“ I do not, command, I do not recommend any one, nor should I ask you to call uponyou know whom I mean.....” said the Queen to me, ‘ but if you ever intend to return the visit which she went and paid

you at Paris, (she who never visits at Versailles !) it appears to me, that the present would be the very best moment for doing so ; do you not think so ?”

I was on the point of wincing a little at this, when she added :

“The attraction is one of mind, and of pure friendship ; such is the charitable light in which we should regard it, as good Christians, and as good Frenchwomen ; and if you go this very hour to Mme. de Pompadour’s I am sure the King will be pleased !”

The fact was, that she came the week before, and called upon me in my quality of Grandee of Spain, on the strength of her being now one of the sisterhood, and immediately after she had received her diploma. It would have been very difficult for me not to have returned her visit, either sooner or later ; and it was but the difference of a few days ; in short, I will confess that I was not proof against the little feeling of vanity, of causing some satisfaction to the amiable Prince, whom I liked so well.

The Queen embraced me, and my chair set me down in the *Cour des Ministres*.

I was announced, and Madame de Pompadour came and received me at the first door, evidently labouring to conceal her surprise and satisfaction. She would insist on placing me above her, and next to the King, who was playing at *ombre* with the Ambassadress of Spain, and the Duke de Saint-Aignan.

Madame de Pompadour began by offering me her thanks for "the honor which I had been good enough to confer upon her." Those were her very words, and I did not controvert what she said, but I turned off the subject, by immediately speaking of other things, particularly of the Bailly de Froulay, who had just arrived at court, as Ambassador of the religion of Malta.

As soon as we had talked enough of the good-for-nothing Maltese, the King's game drew to an end ; and at the request of His Majesty, Madame de Pompadour seated herself at her harpsichord.

“I do not know what I would not give for the pleasure of hearing her *tutoyer* you!” said the Marèchal de Richelieu, coming towards me.

“Nonsense!” I replied, “she is but a Grandee of Spain of the third class, therefore, you will not have that pleasure!—pray do not come and put me out of countenance, but leave me alone.”

The Marèchal de Richelieu went off to the other end of the room, where all the rest of the company stood, grouped close to the harpsichord, to be in the immediate circle, and, if possible, within reach of His Majesty.

I had risen, because the King was no longer seated, but I stood my ground, and behold, I heard Madame de Pompadour sing ;

*“ Ah ! que ma voix devient chère
Depuis que mon berger se plait à l’écouter !”*

These words appeared to me to convey a meaning of *galanterie* so pointedly direct, and so mis-placed before me, that I felt per-

plexed and ashamed, and became "quite sulky" as Richelieu expressed it.

The King seemed to notice the coldness of my manner, but this did not put me the least out of countenance.

Madame de Pompadour had scarcely concluded her gallant allusions and her arietta of IRPYSE, when I approached to make my curtsy; I then retired backwards as though I were leaving the King's cabinet, and without saying a single word, I suffered myself to be re-conducted by this shepherdess to the second door, receiving the civility as proudly as though it were but my right.

This was the first and only time that I ever went to Madame de Pompadour's, but thanks to the Marèchal de Richelieu's indiscretion, my visit afforded food for remark to the Court, and conversation to all the town.

We afterwards ascertained that it was the King who had begged Madame de Pompadour to sing the piece of music in question, it being considered her master-piece; his object was to show her off, and engrossed

by this motive, it never occurred to him, that the words might be interpreted as having any particular allusion.

If I felt myself aggrieved, it was chiefly on account of this disregard of the forms of society, an unusual occurrence at Madame de Pompadour's, for she was strict in her outward observance of them, and it must be allowed that she always behaved with perfect propriety and discretion in public. Good taste, refined manners, and an appearance of retiring modesty, were her natural characteristics, and in these must have consisted her principal attraction.

How full the Court of the Palais-Royal was of odd characters ! and indeed all the intimates of the House of Orleans were composed of the same materials. First of all, there were always Clermont-Gallerandes, who had been for five or six generations fit inmates for the mad-house ; then there was a Brancas, who certainly ought to have been consigned to Bicêtre ; and there was...to whom shall I give the preference ?.....a

Monsieur D'Osmond, a Norman gentleman, who declared himself descended from the Kings of Apulia, poor devil ! and he destroyed or spoilt every single thing that came within his reach. They called him D'Osmond *Brise-tout* and his doings were all recorded in the annals of his day.

Do not imagine that he ever expressed any regret or uneasiness at the havoc he caused ! he only betook himself to fresh subjects, and he was disaster personified. I believe he might have held some office in the Chambers, or in the Orleans stables, but so it was that he was never seen except at the Palais-Royal, the unlucky theatre of his misdeeds.

On New Year's Day for instance, he walked into the drawing-room of the Duc de Chartres, and began by upsetting a stand full of old china ; he had already trodden on the tail of a huge cat, and on the toes of the Duc de Valois, who screamed as if he had been burnt.

By that time he had arrived at the chim-

ney-piece, where he found, and laid hold of, a *bonbonnière* of rock-crystal, and lo and behold, in restoring it to its place he rested his whole weight on his elbow on the porphyry slab !.....There were two hundred and fifty *livres* well laid out, generous Prince ! there were two thousand crowns all in atoms !—you had better shut them up in your cash-box !

It happened that Madame de Lamballe once dropped one of her gloves ;—M. d'Osmond hastened to pick it up, and his great head came in rude collision with that of the young Princess, upon whose forehead he imprinted a frightful bump ! it was the butt of a furious ram against a lovely trellice of roses and jessamine !.....Twenty years sooner, Monsieur de Bernis would have written some delightful lines on the occasion, but the days of triplets in garlands and nosegays, are gone out of fashion, and the best thing that was said upon the occasion was, that Madame de Lamballe had been *demolished* by the Chevalier d'Osmond !

The saying was considered at the time to be very original, but I remember that the author of *Estelle* * had the courage to raise his voice against this metaphorical expression, and said that it was as devoid of delicacy and gallantry, as it was of beauty.

This destructive genius of the Palais-Royal, was here, there, and everywhere, lounging about in all directions ; on one occasion he entered the palace chapel where some new wainscottings had been put up, and spying out a little knot in a new plank, he forthwith began to devise how he might displace it and supply the deficiency with his finger ; it ended by the knot giving way—his finger went through, and remained firmly fixed in the panel ! They were obliged to send for workmen to cut away

* The Chevalier de Florian, Equerry to the Princesse de Lamballe, author of *Numa Pompilius*, and one of the forty members of the *Académie Française*. “ His pastorals left one nothing to desire ” said Madame de Crèquy—“ no wolf had ever entered his sheep-folds. ’—(*Editor’s Note.*)

round the captive finger, a delicate operation which lasted all the evening ; he meanwhile, foaming with rage, for of course everyone made a point of going and sitting in the chapel to amuse themselves at his expense. It was proposed that a *bribi** table should be brought in, but the Marquise de Montesson did not find herself seated comfortably enough, and the Duke of Orleans said it was not worth while.

Then again another time in Madame de Rochambeau's bed-room :

“ D'Osmond ! this is not to be endured ! you have broken two Sèvres vases, and now you must smash my guitar with your elbow !”

“ Then why did you put the hurdy-gurdy in such a place ?”

“ No more a hurdy-gurdy than you are ! it is a first rate mandoline.”

“ Alas ! how mournfully it breathed its last sigh !”

“ Do me the kindness to go away, D'Osmond ; I am going to my dressing-room and I will not let you remain here alone.”

* A game of hazard.

“ Now be good-natured and allow me to warm myself quietly.”

He promised he would not touch anything except the tongs, but before five minutes had elapsed she heard her famous grey parrot scream.....

“ You horrid *Brise-tout* ; abominable, mischievous being !” cried she through the door. “ What are you doing to that poor bird ?”

“ *Ah, mon Dieu, Madame !* I have just had the misfortune to burn his tail, but I assure you it was not my fault !”

“ Very likely that a bird would go and burn its own tail ! Will you please to inform me how it is possible to burn a parrot’s tail ?”

“ Madam, that is easily explained ; I took a candle to go and look at him and he began turning round and round like a fool ! consequently I am not responsible.”

Passing “ from grave to gay, from lively to severe,” I will tell you something about Madame la Comtesse de Blot de Chauvigné,

lady-in-waiting to the Duchesse de Chartres, which same Madame de Blot was the admiration, the charm, and the principal feature of the Palais-Royal.

No one ever *seemed* to possess more taste and tact ; no one was ever half so innocent or so wonderfully sentimental ! “ Moreover, “ one might mistake her for one of the three “ Graces,” wrote the Duke of Orleans to old Damville, “ for she is a well of wisdom and “ an oracle of learning ! she has a waist “ which you might span with your fingers “ and snap across your knee. It is only a “ pity that all this is mere show, for it “ throws everyone else completely into the “ background.”

The Countess would have felt quite ashamed to have taken soup, and as for drinking a glass of wine and water ?—that is an act she certainly never would have committed (*before company*, be it well understood !)

“ Drink wine like any vulgar creature ?—and red wine too ? ah, good gracious how

degrading!—and as for a woman who eats poultry and eggs?...*allons donc ma chère* ; I should eat a quarter of an orange, a custard, half-a-dozen strawberries, and then a little milk, that is, milk mixed with water from that fountain at Ville-D'Avray, and sheep's milk, understand me ; the same milk with which lambs are fed—those innocent lambs ! How can anyone drink cow's milk ?—milk, actual cow's milk, fancy such a thing ?—milk that calves are fattened on !—and then the trouble of arrapping one's mouth to utter that strange and terrible name of C-O-W ! What ! go and establish yourself in a sort of voluntary intercourse, a sort of nutritive intimacy with a cow ?—a great animal with horns ?—No, instead of that, one ought to live like the fairies we have read of, who could walk upon the ears of corn without bending them !.....oh ! my dear friend, I cannot bear to hear these frightful creatures mentioned, who chew the cud, and *low* ! I am sure that cows low ;

and in my opinion they are the most abject and most odious animals in the world! I was saying the other day, to M. de Buffon, ‘as it is necessary that there should be milk in the world, how comes it that doves are unable to provide us with it?’”

“That was spoken like an angel!” exclaimed the Maréchale de Luxembourg, “May I presume to enquire what M. de Buffon said in reply to you?”

“Why, he made a joke of the matter, I know not wherefore, and advised me to drink nothing but milk of almonds.”

But, however, when undergoing the inconveniences of travelling, in a case of unusual exertion or unexpected and excessive hunger, Madame de Blot abated somewhat of her ethereal diet, and had the courage to take upon herself the responsibility of going so far as even to suck the little wing of a stewed pigeon; that was the only meat she could put up with (*in company*, be it still understood). The flesh of chickens was too

coarse, too compact, and that of all *petits-pieds* too strong, and too *masculine* tasted !

“ No one will ever allow themselves to entertain the idea, though a very simple one it is, that a woman is a rose !”

A charming simile, and quite new, which always ended in her launching forth most bitterly against pickled cabbage, black-puddings, and especially asparagus.

It was impossible to understand what asparagus could have done to her, except it was that her husband appeared to be very fond of them.

“ Will you take some of these *oreilles de cerfs en menu-droits*, Countess ?”

“ Surely Madame does not take me for a huntsman, or a yeoman-pricker ?”

“ Do, Duchesse de Chartres, make her eat some of this boar’s head *aux quatre-épices* !”

“ But Monseigneur does not think Madame’s ladies are poachers and *sabottiers* ?”

“ Come Madame de Blot, let us be good friends ; I am going to send you, as some-

thing extraordinary, a little glass of this capital Cyprus which I hope you will drink with good grace in honour of the Goddess Venus ! It is from the Knight's cellars and is the best growth of the Island."

" Monseigneur ! do you take me for a Bacchanal, an Erigone ? do I look like a panther ? if so, all I require is, to be be-dizened with wreaths of ivy ;—let them bring forth *erotics*, with the thyrsus and the tambourines of the Menades. Where are the vine branches ? and where the carved cup of the son of Semele ?"

" Why, that is exactly like that large picture which is in my dining-room in Paris."

" But, Monseigneur, how can women whose aerial nature...women, women of high breeding...how can they induce themselves to eat anything that is unworthy of them ?—women of high breeding should be like the bees and butterflies, who live by suction on the juice of flowers, bathed in the

kisses of Zephyrus, and the tears of Aurora on the roses, &c."

"You are a *savante* and a sylph, Madame de Blot! one of Marmontel's own sylphs, and the quintessence of roses. Here is to your health as a sylph, Madame de Blot!"

This Countess had a little canine favorite; (she never would have it called a dog—see her horror of cows.)

"He has acquired the habit, and it has become necessary to his comfort that he should be taken notice of; nobody says anything good-natured to him when I am out, and I am sure it makes him unhappy," said she to Mademoiselle Minau de la Mistringue, her companion; "you ought to speak to him constantly, and not by snatches as you do, my dear young lady! you ought to tell him some story or recite something rather long, that would keep up the interest; such as some historical fact—a moral tale—or a play for instance; will you read him this new tragedy "*Les Guèbres ou la Tolérance*?"—no, no; rather let him hear

“ *La Coquette corrigée*,” or better still “ *Le Philosophe sans le savoir*,” and read it with expression, to amuse him.—Yes! darling creature! and to console it for the absence of its mistress, Mam’selle de la Mistringue will be good enough to read it a five act comedy!”

There was, connected with the chapel of the Palais-Royal, a very tall, fat sacristan from *Franc-comte*, whom no one ever saw or received, except on New Year’s Day, as is the old custom. This man having as much as he could do to carry himself, called one morning, on the first of January, on the Comtesse de Blot in her turn, and sat himself down in an arm-chair, to which she had had the affability to motion him in silence.

Suddenly, he fancied that he perceived some faint movements of resistance under him.....some opposing undulations..... he introduced his hand between himself and the chair, and found that he was sitting on a spaniel! The tail protruded, and the Abbé began by prudently twisting it round.

and then poking it out of sight, beneath him ; determined to act effectually, he then raised himself up and dropped down again with all his weight, so as to give it the finishing stroke ! after that, he spread out his coat-tails and his great hands, and twisted himself about, manœuvring like a true *franc-comtois* as he was, and, ultimately, insinuating the little “canine favorite” into his coat-pocket, he went out and threw him down at the first convenient spot.

Madame de Blot never learnt what became of her dog ! some told her that he had been turned into a sylph ; others, that he had been carried off by the Nymphs, like Hylas. There was another version, of which my son was the author, and which Madame de Blot would feign believe, although it was the most ridiculous ; my son told her that it was the Duc de Duras, who had had the meanness to have the dog stolen, in order that he might find favor in the eyes of His Majesty the King of Denmark, he (the Duke) being appointed to do the

honors of the capital, and point out the wonders of France to his admiring eyes.

Madame de Blot instantly believed this story, and they wished her to write to His Danish Majesty, to beg her favorite back again, or, at least, to recommend it to his care ; but the Duchesse de Chartres interfered to prevent such folly. Some of our young friends were imprudent enough to write to M. de Duras in Madame de Blot's name.

CHAPTER V.

Voltaire's love of the marvellous—The Real Iron Mask—Common Practice of wearing Masks in Travelling—The Provost of Paris and his Notable Wife—"Kill or Cure," or the Innocent Experiment !—*Lettres-de-Cachet*.

Monsieur Voltaire was very fond of detailing curious stories, but above all, he wished to appear accurately informed as to certain historical facts and certain state secrets, which he always had from some high person, with whom he was on the most intimate terms.

The first time that I had ever heard the "Iron Mask" mentioned, was by Fontenelle, who had just been told of it by Voltaire ; the latter declared that his authority was the Duke de Richelieu, who (said Voltaire) had learnt the whole affair from the Duke de Noailles, his father-in-law ; which Duke de Noailles was supposed to have received it from his uncle, the Marèchal de Roquelaure, and from his father-in-law, M. Boyer de Villemoisson, late *Intendant* of Provence !

"That is all uncommonly well arranged," said the Marèchal de Richelieu, "it is quite true that I have heard of this man with the Iron Mask, but it has been invariably from Voltaire alone, and never from the Duke de Noailles ; I will pledge my word that the Duke never spoke of old Boyer, his father-in-law, to any living soul !"

"One of Mother Goose's tales !" said the Duchesse de Luynes to the Marèchal de Noailles, and just see if it is possible that M. de Louvois could have travelled eight days, post, from Versailles to the Isle Ste.

Marguerite, without its being known? If he had only slept from home for three nights, it would have been spoken of for six months!"

"What is still better than that, and detailed more miraculously," replied the Marèchal, "is, Monsieur de Louvois' speaking to the prisoner with his head uncovered; a circumstance which could not have become known, except through this Minister, or the Iron Mask himself; and what do you think of that story of the silver plate?"

"Oh, as for that!" interrupted M. Brancas, who had only just emerged from the jail of Ste. Marguerite, after fourteen months' imprisonment, "that is as great a piece of folly as was ever uttered; for there is a moat round the ramparts, and a dead wall between the rooms of the prison and the sea!"

"It is quite clear," said the Duchesse de Damville, solemnly, "that the affair must be incomprehensible, since it is a State Secret."

"Wonderful secret," muttered the Duke

de la Vallière (who had been for a long time Minister of the Interior, and within whose jurisdiction fell *lettres-de-cachet* and state-prisons.)

“Oh ! no doubt a profound secret,” added M. de Moras, formerly Minister *de la marine*, “and one which will be strictly preserved, for it does not exist.”

This conversation took place at my house, before the Duke de Penthièvre, who was fully convinced that Voltaire had invented the mysterious story, in order to pass for one of the best informed writers of the day.

As I promised to be just and to tell you the *pro's* and *con's*, I am bound to add, that the opinion of the Comte de Maurepas, was not quite so unfavorable to Voltaire, as that of the Duc de Penthièvre, for all that M. de Maurepas accused him of was, having concocted a sort of heroic-tragic poem on a chapter of Guzman d'Alfarache.

I should also add, that the Baron de Breteuil was entirely of M. de Maurepas' opinion, his predecessor in the ministry of the interior.

Here, then, are the slender grounds on which Voltaire constructed his romantic story.

Charles de Gonzague, Duke of Mantua and Montferrat, was married to an Arch-Duchess of Austria, the bitter enemy of France ; and his private secretary, or principal confidant, was a Piedmontese, who called himself the Comte Mattioli. This bosom-friend of the Prince had an insatiable talent for intrigue ; and the impunity with which he had exercised it, had so whetted his appetite and corrupted his views, that he actually had the assurance to stop and rob a courier, charged with dispatches from the King of France to the Duc de Créquy, his Ambassador at Rome. Pope Alexander was at death's door ; there was a prospect of a conclave being shortly assembled ; France had her creatures to protect, her antagonists to outwit, and her instructions to transmit to M. de Créquy ; imagine the rage of Louis XV !

This Mattioli first commenced translating

the dispatches which he had purloined ; afterwards, he began a mercenary calculation consistent with his venal nature, and the slender position which he felt he held at Court, depending solely on the favor of the Duke of Mantua, the most tyrannical and the most capricious, the most avaricious, and the most pernicious of all the petty Italian Princes.

Count Mattioli presented himself with an air of great mystery to the Chevalier Turgot, *Chargé-d'Affaires* of France to Modena, with whom Mattioli had appointed a meeting, on the frontiers of the Ducal States, in order that he might set on foot his negotiations.

The Chevalier advised the Count to bid a final adieu to the Court of Mantua, and to go and deposit the dispatch (detained *by order of the Duke*, as the Piedmontese assured him) in the hands of the Intendant of Grenoble, M. de la Moignon, whose duty it would be to reward the bearer handsomely, as soon as he was authorised to do so by the King, his master.

Mattioli's future fortune would be made, splendidly and firmly based on the sum of money of which he had come in quest, at the hands of M. Turgot, in remuneration of the service which he purposed rendering to His Most Christian Majesty. He was to carry off with him all the translations which might have been made, as well as the French originals ; in short, I know not all that the Chevalier Turgot said to Mattioli, but the result was, that the latter fled precipitately from Mantua, and went and took up a position near the picket stationed close to Mont Mélian, on the frontiers of France and Savoy.

It was beyond the jurisdiction of our *fleurs-de-lys*, be it understood, but this did not prevent the Intendant of Dauphiny from having him arrested by his mounted patrols, together with the dispatches from Versailles, and the translations, which he had wished to deliver for ransom.

M. de Lamoignon detained him until the return of his courier. They had received

direct information from Monsieur Turgot, that it was he, Mattioli, who was to be considered the author of, and the principal agent in, this insolent attempt ; and you may imagine that an act of insolence was an unpardonable crime in the eyes of the King !

But what confidence could be reposed in such a character ? or what security could there be in obtaining or paying him ? who could restrain or prevent his going and making a traffic of the many secrets relating to French affairs, of which he was the depository, and which must remain in his possession until death ?

I heard M. de Maurepas say, that many members of the *sacré-collège*, and the prime minister of a foreign court, would be found compromised by this correspondence being revealed. M. Colbert was of opinion, that Mattioli should be hanged ; but M. de Pom-pone recommended a more gentle treatment towards the culprit, and declared his anxiety to maintain a good understanding with the

Duke of Savoy, which, in his capacity of Minister of Foreign Affairs, he had every reason to insist upon. Any open and avowed violation of this Prince's territory would, undoubtedly, have produced a most impolitic irritation, especially as at that moment, the policy of the Cabinet of Versailles was moderation.

M. de Lamoignon had the subject of this story conveyed to the prison of the Isle of Ste. Marguerite, a convenient locality, inasmuch as it was not too far distant from Grenoble, and yet far enough from the frontiers of Savoy and the authorities of Chambéry, who did not dare say anything, on account of the negligence of their agents on the frontiers.

It is possible, indeed it is very likely, that on his way from the frontier to prison, they may have obliged Count Mattioli to wear a mask, as he might have been recognised by some of his countrymen, who are always to be found in great numbers both Piedmontese and Savoyards, in one or

two provinces *ultra Rhodanum*. In fact, it was customary in those days to mask State-prisoners, and they were generally conveyed on horseback, on account of certain local difficulties. One of my uncles once met M. Fouquet, wearing a black velvet mask, and mounted on a mule, in the middle of the Cévennes ; and it was only on his return to Paris, that my uncle learnt who the State-prisoner was, whom he had passed on the road.

My Aunt de Breteuil was one day in a litter with a little boy, her god-son, who was frightened at everything, for which reason, his godmother was conveying him to Picardy, to the Jesuits, with as much precaution as if he had been an invalid lady.

This little fellow had held masks in especial dread, and my aunt had the great kindness not to put on hers, from feelings of compassion. She was very fond of the poor child, for he was infirm and sickly, and nobody noticed him much.

My Aunt was followed by a couple of

lackeys on horseback. In the course of the journey they found the high-road stopped up by a post-chaise surrounded by *cavaliers de marèchaussée*, in which was seated, a man masked

“Madame de Breteuil ! Madame de Breteuil !” exclaimed the prisoner, “will you not have the charity to allow my wife to be informed, that I have been arrested at her father’s house, and that they are taking me to the Château of Ham ? You will do me a great service, and I hope you will not refuse me this consolation ?”

“Do you see anything improper in this request ?” said my aunt addressing the commander of the escort, “and would you tell me the gentleman’s name ?”

The Brigadier replied, that that was impossible, but that he did not wish, nor could he prevent the prisoner from telling his name on the highway, while his carriage was being repaired ; that his orders were to make him wear a mask, but not to gag him ; in short, the state-prisoner with the mask

was the famous Count de Roucy (La Rochefoucault), and my aunt's god-son, who had such a dread of masks, became—guess who?—the husband of my cousin Emilie, whose mother and godmother were two madcaps, of whom the Baron de Breteuil was guardian-substitute.

But to finish with the prisoner Mattioli, who died in the Bastile, in 1703, and whose death is recorded in the registers of St. Paul, bearing date the 20th November; here are several contradictions, which emanated from the Comte de Maurepas, and when you shall have read "*Le Siècle de Louis XIV.*," you will see that each of these contradictions has reference to some assertion of Voltaire's.

It is not true, that the prisoner in question ever wore an *iron* mask; a mask of the colour of iron was the utmost he ought to have said.

It is not true that he was conveyed, first of all, to the Château of Pignerol, of which M. de St. Mars was governor, or that

this was in 1662 ; for this officer was not put in command of this fortress till 1664, as M. de Maurepas has certified in the archives of his department. It is not true, that M. de Louvois was ever away long enough from Versailles to enable him to go as far as the Isle of Ste. Marguerite ; and this minister of Louis XIV was not in a position to absent himself, nor to travel incognito.

Voltaire started by saying, that his Iron Mask had written something or other on a very fine shirt, which he had thrown out of the window of his room, and that a fisherman had found it floating on the sea. He was reminded that the prisoners' rooms do not open towards the sea-shore, and that this very fine shirt would have fallen within the inner court of the Fort, inasmuch as the outside wall is forty paces from the *Tour-Magne* ; it was to avoid this difficulty, that M. de Voltaire metamorphosed the shirt into a silver plate !

The Baron de Breteuil, a minister of the present day, adds to all this, that there

exists in the archives of the Bastille a letter from M. de Barbesieux, a minister of Louis XIV, addressed to M. de Saint Mars, governor of that fortress, and dated the 19th December, 1697, in which is the following ; “ without relaxing aught in the care of your “ old prisoner, and without holding any communication with whomsoever, as to what “ crime he may have committed, still you may “ afford him any indulgence that the King’s “ service will admit of, &c.” which proves beyond doubt, that there was *something* that M. de Saint Mars’ prisoner had done, and this makes another assertion of Voltaire’s fall to the ground, about an answer which he makes Louis XV to have given to one of his *valets-de-chambre*. People of the highest consideration and the best informed of my time, have always thought that this famous story never had any further foundation, than the capture and captivity of the Piedmontese Mattioli. All the details which Voltaire has given, are manifestly and ridiculously fictitious. I think I may as-

sure you, that that is all the truth of THE IRON MASK.

Madame de Boulainvilliers, the wife of the Provost of Paris, is, as every one knows, a most charitable and angelic person. She usually passes the greater part of the summer in her beautiful château at Passy, whither her husband goes to sup every evening and returns to Paris at five o'clock in the morning for his audience at the Châtelet.

I always wonder how respectable people can be found to take such judicial duties upon themselves for the sum of nine hundred and thirty six *livres-tournois* a year ! but I thank my stars when they are such as Monsieur Bernard de Boulainvilliers, Comte de Coubert, and the Marquis de Passy-sur-Seine to fill the office, with their hundred and sixty thousand *écus* of their own, and with honour to spare ! (The former we used to call *le petit Bernard*).

As he was leaving Passy-sur-Seine one

fine morning, he heard repeated cries of pain issuing from a house in the *Rue de la Basse*, a mean and dilapidated tenement. He got off his horse and knocked at the door of the house, but as they did not open it, and he was in a hurry to reach Paris, he wrote a few words with a pencil on a little piece of paper and despatched it to his wife ; the messenger could not inform Mme. de Boulainvillier's maids what was the matter, but they were desired by her husband to wake her immediately. Mme. de Boulainvilliers dressed herself in great haste, and sent to rouse her domestic medical attendant, an old and faithful servant who always accompanied her in her visits of charity, and they set off for this house, which was at a short distance from the Château de Passy, but the door obstinately resisted further progress ; on approaching a window on the ground-floor, the shutters of which were closed as were the door and all apertures on the side of the Rue Basse, they heard at intervals the groans of a person in pain,

suppressed sobs, and every now and then a very shrill cry ; but beyond that they heard nothing moving, nor any sort of noise in any other part of the house.

In the mean time M. de Boulainvilliers had arrived at the *Roque des Bons Hommes* and in passing before the doorway of the convent he perceived two persons dressed in a very strange way, who were endeavouring to conceal themselves behind some building rubbish. “ *Monseigneur ?* ” “ Hold your tongue,” replied he to his groom, and the first thing he did on arriving at the *barrière de Chaillot* was to send a dozen custom-house agents to arrest the two men, whose dress had aroused his suspicions. They offered no resistance (which indeed they were not in a position to do) for one of them was clad merely in a night-shirt tied with bows of pink ribbon, and the other, who appeared older and less timid, had on a dressing gown of brocade, the which was spotted with blood on the right side, and particularly on the right sleeve. They made

him open his hands, which he tried to keep closed, and the Provost at once observed that his right hand was deeply stained with blood, and his nails even encrusted with it.

It was probable that these two culprits might have run out of the house from whence issued the cries which had struck M. de Boulainvilliers, and that when they heard the knocking at the door they fled through the garden which led to the quay of the Seine. However that might be, every thing confirmed the supposition that they were watching an opportunity for stealing past the barrier and so attain some conveyance which might carry them to a hiding place in the obscure quarters of Paris ; but our early and very careful magistrate disappointed them in that, and detained them at the Custom-house until he should send some of the Provost's officers to bring them to his Hôtel in the *Rue Bergère*, there to undergo a strict examination before

they were sent to prison, if it were necessary.

You must not suppose that the magistrates in those days could apprehend and imprison people without sufficient grounds; excepting in cases of *Lettres de cachet*, or of being caught in the act by the Police, every one might feel perfectly certain of resting in his own bed.

How shall I tell of the astonishing and revolting spectacle which Madame de Boulaivilliers encountered, when acting upon the advice of her bailiff, she determined to gain entry to the room by breaking open the door? She beheld a woman bound upon a carpenter's bench; one of her legs was flayed alive, and her blood had deluged the floor of the room!—on the ground lay a surgeon's scalpel and pincers, and I know not what other instruments steeped in blood... In a room on the second floor they found a bed unmade, a man's embroidered clothes, a sword, perfumes, a pot of rouge, and last not least, a small portfolio containing a letter

addressed to "*The Comte de Sade, poste restante à Paris.*"—It bore the post mark of Marseilles and contained a horrible account of the discovery of two bodies which they had fished out of a pond.....The wretched woman had fainted away from anguish, and mental sufferings ; Madame de Boulainvilliers had her wounds dressed, and herself assisted in adjusting the skin on her leg, with wonderful strength of mind. At last when her senses had returned and the hemorrhage was stopped ; the following is the substance of the deposition which she made, and which the bailiff wrote at her dictation.

A man between thirty-four and thirty-six years of age, tall, rather stout, and all his features perfectly regular, with a very red face, deep blue eyes and an insidious soft expression, came and hired this house of which she was the porter's wife. He paid two quarters in advance, he would not allow the necessary repairs to be completed, and he would not tell his name. He sometimes

came home in the middle of the night with others, but generally he let himself in with a pass-key without any noise, he never would enter the Porter's Lodge, nor would he allow of his coming out, but always turned the key upon him, and shut him in until he went away again.

* * * * *

“ it would only be,” he said pursing up his mouth and smiling with his tiger-like eyes, “ a slight incision to test the effect of a wonderful ointment—it would not be perceptible in a quarter of an hour—and she would gain ten louis, so the wretched woman suffered herself to be tied to the bench”

* * * * *

* * * * *

When she understood that they were talking of flaying her alive, she gave a start which removed the cloth they had placed to gag her ; she then began to shriek violently, and Providence so ordered that at that very

instant M. de Boulainvilliers should pass by the house.

To cut short this horrible story, I must tell you that this unfortunate woman whom they had carried to the Château de Passy, died the evening of the same day of lock-jaw, according to the Doctors, for they could not discover any traces of poison in her body. She had neither time nor strength to enable her to sign her deposition, of which the bailiff of the Marquise of Passy, who had written it, and the Marquise de Passy who had heard her make it, were the only witnesses, and thereupon arose a strange complexity as to the drawing up of the prosecution, for the exercise of the Seignorial jurisdictions was encumbered by a multitude of requirements of recent date, and the Provost of Paris, (who always kept a strict and jealous watch over the justices of the dependences of the Louvre) did not choose that it should be in their power to say that he was less severe on a deposition subscribed by his feudal officer, and in a

case which came under his own personal knowledge.

The Comte de Sade demurred to the indictment, on the plea that there were no grounds for the prosecution, he having acted, as he had the impudence to assert, with the concurrence of the deceased, and it was for the purpose of making experiment of a balsam which was to heal wounds with a touch, and would be of the greatest importance in the armies of the King of France, and to the human race in general.

The judges listened to the case with horror, but their respect for the letter of the law upset it, and the Comte de Sade had to thank the impartiality and probity of M. de Boulainvilliers that he was not hanged. The King's prerogative was untouched, as it was right and proper that it should be, and this abominable man was confined for life with the brothers of Saint-Lazare by *lettre-de-cachet*, and wonderful to relate, that did not give any displeasure to the gentlemen of the Encyclopædia, who would fain deny

the right of the King to imprison bad characters, and criminals cunning enough to evade the law.

I defy them to mention one solitary instance of abuse in the *lettres-de-cachet*, except it be in the case of that banker of Bourdeaux whom Madame de Langeac had a spite against ; and what was the consequence ? Madame de Langeac was banished by *lettre-de-cachet* to Saint-Etienne-en-Forez.

To whom then and for whom would Voltaire and Monsieur Diderot address their protests against *lettres-de-cachet* ? To cut-throats and swindlers apparently !

CHAPTER VI.

A romance of life—An invitation—M. Tiercelet de la Barotte—Heraldic notions—An amiable *chanoinesse*—The intended victim—A zealous friend-in-need—*Les suisses*—Awful moments—The Archbishop—A row—All's well—Another invitation.

A FEW years previous to the time at which I am now writing, an event took place which presented nothing very extraordinary in its progress, but its *dénouement* appeared delightfully romantic, and as I was carrying on a very close correspondence with the Marquise de Louvois during her vice-royalty at Navarre I wrote an account of it to her

in the form of a novel, in which I left blanks for all the names, that I might call her ingenuity into exercise, and perhaps also, try my ability in drawing likenesses.

Madame de Louvois recognized everyone, and replied by sending us a charming play on the identical subject with every name correctly given, which was the cause of endless compliments to us both. As the little composition has the semblance only of a romance, and as all the details are perfectly true, I have determined on introducing it here, such as it is, without connection, to spare me the fatigue and annoyance of description. What encourages me to present it in its original shape of short dialogues after the English fashion is, that my characters were supposed to speak exactly as the originals would have done ; however, here is the original novel, which I had entitled "THE TWO RELATIVES ; OR, THE DOUBLE INVITATION."

‘ M.,

‘ Your company is requested at

‘ the inauguration, investiture, and religious
 ‘ profession of the *Very Mighty Damoisel*
 ‘ *Mademoiselle Henriette-Jacqueline-Olympe*
 ‘ *Anastasie-de-Lenoncour-de-Héroutal-de-*
 ‘ *Baudricourt*. The ceremony will take
 ‘ place on Saturday the Fourteenth of
 ‘ March, in the Church of the Royal Abbey
 ‘ of Panthemont, Rue de Grenelle, Paris.

‘ The profession will be received by the
 ‘ most illustrious and very reverend Seigneur,
 ‘ *Monseigneur Christophe-Henry de Beau-*
 ‘ *mont de Repayre*, Archbishop of Paris,
 ‘ Duke of St. Cloud and Peer of France;
 ‘ Prelate-Commander of the Royal Order of
 ‘ the Holy Ghost, &c.

‘ *Monseigneur Pie-Sinibald-Andrè-Doria* of
 ‘ the Princes of Melpha and Colombranon, a
 ‘ noble Genoese, Archbishop of Amathonta,
 ‘ *in partibus infidelium*, and apostolic nuncio
 ‘ to the Court of France, will give the *salut*
 ‘ and the papal benediction, and grant ple-
 ‘ nary indulgence.

‘ The sermon will be delivered by Messire
François-Joachim-Gabriel-Archange de

‘ *Pierres de Bernis*, Canon and Counts of
‘ *Lyons*, Grand Chambellan of -the archi-
‘ primatial basilisk of St. John, and first of
‘ the forty of the Académie Française.

VENI, CREATOR OPTIME.

“ Well, I do not care what other people might say, but this note is just as it should be!—quite the thing! The Countess belongs to a superior order of beings, one of the good old times; pedigrees and heraldry are the only things which seem worthy of her attention, and one might call her life a continuation of her ancestors’; she talks of nothing but crests, and dreams of sinopes, gules and vairs; she is quite aware of the value of a rebatement, and the meaning of a pale; she is a wonderful woman!—”

“ Here then, are the seventy four invitations for Versailles,” said a little gentleman dressed in a suit of black, to a tall man in livery laced *à la Burgogne*. (He was, evi-

dently, the lackey-in-chief of the house.) "Here are three hundred and ninety for our own quarter of the Faubourg St. Germain ; about twenty for the *quartier des Capucines*, from the place Vendôme to the outside of the Porte St. Honorè inclusive, and five or six for the Marais. (Madame says it is bad policy to show any neglect to parliamentary people.) You will send off a man on horse-back, express, to convey this note to the Comte de Mercy, the Imperial Ambassador."

Monsieur Tiercelet de la Barotte, secretary and steward to the Comtesse de Rupelmonde et Warangest, had placed on one side, eight invitations in manuscript, not printed as the others were.

"These are our notes for the Princes and Princesses of the blood-royal," said he to himself, eyeing his fine *mongrel* writing with inward satisfaction. He had been particular not to sprinkle them with sand or powder, for fear of endangering their Serene Highness's eyes, but chiefly on account of a point of etiquette, originated by the Marquis de

Villeroy, who was always afraid that the King would be poisoned by some petition.

Monsieur Tiercelet then betook himself to a large seal parted by two bars and coupé in three, which made a fine quartering of eight alliances, and eight achievements, without counting the escutcheon of pretence.

It was a handsome, spinster's seal, (a lozenge) with chapitral decoration and the Rupelmonde motto, QU'Y-QU'EN-GROGNE? He carefully sealed the princely invitations with black wax, as enjoined in all cases of votive ceremonies, signifying thereby, that all persons who devote themselves to the religious profession, are under an obligation to wear black, *ipse facto*. This operation was also performed entirely to Monsieur Tiercelet's personal satisfaction, except that, perhaps, the cross of the Chanoinesse in one of the impressions, was not quite as clear as it might have been, and the motto was rather imperfect.

“Now then, La Barotte!—now then!—do

hurry yourself, if you can !” were the words uttered in the masculine tones of the Comtesse de Rupelmonde’s voice, as this personage entered the private sitting-room, where her secretary was at work. “What have you been doing here ?” she continued, with much bitterness and exceeding irritation.—“What have you been thinking of ? have you just dropped down from the clouds ? Is it possible, M’sieur d’la Barotte, that, after having been in my service so long a time, you should not have learnt better than to do such a foolish thing ?—allow me to tell you—”

“Madame, really I have not the least idea what—”

“Why, sir, you are going to put black seals on the letters to the Princes of the Blood, when the Court is not in mourning ! You wish to have me thought a fool, and become the by-word of both court and town ? —There !—I commit to the flames the letters you have sealed with black !—black seals to the Princes of the Blood not in

anourning !—I should most likely have had a dangerous illness in consequence, and a pretty position I should have been in, had I not been inspired to come and see where you were !”

Monsieur Tiercelet set to work again, looking quite resigned and repentant, because Madame la Comtesse Brigitte de Rupelmonde was a tall lady, between forty and sixty years of age, tolerably stout, *exigeante* haughty, rather violent, and wonderfully impatient, (with her servants.) Her voice was masculine, her skin the colour of bistre, and her eyes green ; she was bountifully supplied with a pair of extensive eyebrows, and added to all this, she was coadjutrix of the very noble and distinguished chapter of Sainte-Aldegonde de Mauberge, in succession to the Princess Marie de Beauvau, who was justly considered the youngest and most agreeable Abbess of the canonical world.

The Comtesse Brigitte then, was *Chanoinesse* of Mauberge, and on the strength of

this, she wore an ermine border to her dress, a corset closed like those of the favorites of Henry the Third, and over all, a beautiful ribbon of the same dimensions, and the same blue, as that of a Knight of the HOLY GHOST.

Moreover, it is proper that I should state that she was the aunt and guardian of Mademoiselle Henriette de Lénoncour, who, on Saturday, the fourteenth of March, was to take the vows of absolute obedience, claustral seclusion, and perpetual chastity, at the Abbey of Panthemont.

“One would have supposed, that you might have received and kept her with you, in your chapter,” said the *Presidente* Hocquart, insidiously and maliciously.

(Observe, that this was on the eve of the thirteenth of March at the Hôtel de Beauvau.)

“*Madame*, she has unfortunately two quarterings of law on her mother’s side,” was the tart reply of the coadjutrix ; “her nobility no longer belongs to the chapter,

and moreover she is too giddy and romantic for me to take charge of her."

("That is to say," was the charitable reflection of the *Présidente*, "she is too young and too pretty for you to suffer her to remain near you.")

The Marquise de Boufflers upon this immediately observed, in her off-hand thoughtless manner, that it was really quite committing a murder, and that she ought to marry her niece to her cousin the little de Gondrecourt. Madame de Rupelmonde made no reply; it was affirmed that she blushed, but it was difficult to detect it; they might as well say that they had seen a brick or a piece of crockery blush, or if you will, a coach wheel under its thick coat of vermilion!

As soon as she had left the room, Mme. de Craon took upon herself to say, in an under tone evincing some vexation, "I fear that the Coadjutrix is a bad woman!—" "Sister! she has always passed for a devil incarnate," answered the Maréchal de Beau-

vau : whereupon the Princesse de Craon, encouraged by this reply of her brother-in-law, undertook to justify the remark she had just made, by the following details—

She said that two days previously, she went to pay a visit to Mlle. de Lènoncour at the grating of the Convent Parlour, and after a silence of some moments, occupied in looking at one another sadly, the pretty novice said in accents of despair, that she hoped that Heaven would one day bestow upon her the power of being able to forgive her cousin for all the sorrows she had heaped upon her for the last six months! “ Dear me ! What is this ? What sort of sorrows, *mon enfant* ? I thought from what your aunt told us, that your vocation was entirely your *own* choice ? ”

“ He is married,” she replied, half choked with her sobs.

“ Married ? I was not aware of it *ma coute belle* are you quite sure of it ? ”

“ Alas ! it is perfectly true, Madame ! my aunt de Rupelmonde told me so herself.”

“ He married ! the Viscount ! ” suddenly

exclaimed the Chevalier de Chastellux ; if he is married, it is either in desperation or madness ! Oh ! the wicked Rupelmonde, the jealous and vindictive fury ! Let her do her worst, she will never triumph over the feelings of execration which are in store for her !”

“ *Eh, mon bon Dieu !*” said la Marèchal de Mirepoix, “ who would suppose that the Countess could be guilty of such a folly at her age, and towards the Viscount too, who is young enough to be her grandson !... I should rather think that she has devised the infamous plot, to obtain the inheritance of this poor Henriette, who is her ward and niece, and who has at least sixteen hundred *écus* a year !”

“ What an abominable shame !” was the general exclamation, “ How degrading for a person of her rank ! what an infamous proceeding for a relation, but especially wicked for a *Chanoinesse*, a *religieuse* !”

“ Never mind,” said Madame de Coislin, “ there are no people who give themselves such impertinent airs as vulgar people who play the Lady, and there are no creatures

worse than they who play the Saint!".....
"Prince," interrupted the mistress of the house, addressing her husband, "would you approve of my going to speak to the Archbishop about it? I should not have a moment to spare," she added in a calm and dignified manner, "you hear the profession is to take place this morning? the vows will be taken in a few hours!"

The Marshal bowed his head in token of respectful assent, and twenty minutes afterwards the Maréchale-princesse de Beauvau found herself at the gates of the Archbishop's palace, having had considerable difficulty in awakening the porters, and no wonder, for it was half past two in the morning.

The clock of Notre Dame was striking three, as the two porters whom she had startled from their dreams, methodically approached her carriage door, halbert in hand. They had donned, with care, their full-dress buff livery so richly laced in silver, nor had they omitted to sling across their shoulders their fringed baldricks to which

long rapiers were appended ; on their heads they wore a small cocked-hat surmounted by a plume of the Beaumont colours. It was for all this preparation that they had kept Madame la Maréchale waiting one half hour, and when she had explained that she wished to speak to the Archbishop, they informed her that his Grace was (or ought to be) in privacy at the seminary of Saint-Magloire, unless he had gone to spend the festival of Saint-Bruno with the Reverend Fathers Chartreux in the Rue de l'Enfer, or he might be gone to rest himself at his château at Conflans-sur-Seine. They also thought it likely that Monseigneur had gone to sleep at St. Cyr, where the Bishop of Chartres invariably invited him for the anniversary service performed in memory of Madame de Maintenon ; in short it was impossible to say where Monseigneur de Beaumont could be found before the moment of his entering the church of Panthémont for the ceremony of the morning. The day

was beginning to break and Madame de Beauvau returned, sadly, home.

By seven o'clock in the morning, she was at the Monastery of Panthémont, and sent in word to the Abbess that she should be very glad to speak to her as soon as possible; Madame de Richelieu sent back to say that she could not repair to the parlour, because she was obliged to attend service in the choir at the canonical hours.

Madame de Beauvau then asked, if she might not be allowed to enter the Convent, as she had a most important communication to disclose. As may be imagined, Madame de Panthémont answered, that such a thing was impossible, without previous permission from the Archbishop of Paris. Madame de Beauvau, accordingly, returned to her carriage, to wait the arrival of the Prelate.

In the mean time, the richly gilt carriages, vis-à-vis with seven windows, princely and ducal equipages with their crimson roofs, the magnificent sets of six horses with plumes on their heads, and rich harness, a

noisy crowd, in short, dotted every here and there with lackeys, filled the broad street of Grenelle, and obstructed all the approaches to the Abbey of Panthèmont.

It was past eleven o'clock, when a servant, in a livery of cloth of silver, turned up with crimson velvet, hastily approached the carriage which contained his mistress ;

“ *Madame la Maréchale*, the Archbishop is arrived, he entered by the cloister gate, he is already in the sanctuary, and the ceremony is about to commence.—”

Madame de Beauvau instantly wrote a few lines on her tablets, and ordered her servant to make way through the crowd, and lead her, without a moment's loss of time to the sacristy.

The church was hung around with splendid tapestry, which was surmounted by a band of white damask, fringed with gold, and covered with coats of arms and affinities of the noble maiden. The rich carpets which covered the admired mosaic pavement of this beautiful church, were

provided from the privy purse ; the King's lustres and girandoles were to be seen everywhere in profusion ; but, unluckily, as there were not exactly as many arm-chairs as there were ladies invited, they who were obliged to put up with a less easy seat, complained bitterly against the steward of the Privy Purse, the *sieur Papillon*.

The chancel was filled with noble Bishops in violet cassocks, and Canons in full dress, carrying their grey amices on their arms, venerable Benedictines, Bernardines, Feuillans, Récollets, Minimes, and Capucines in their varied and picturesque costumes.

In the midst of this œcumenical council, was seen the tall classical figure of Monseigneur Christophe de Beaumont, supported by his arch-priests and vicars-general. He was seated exactly in the middle of the congregation, with his back turned to the altar. With his eyes down-cast, any one would have said that his pale and severe countenance looked somewhat inanimate, but as soon as those large black orbs shone upon

you, the open expression of them was so exceedingly animated, so penetrating, and so steadfast, that one felt captivated as it were by his enthusiasm in the cause of his religion.

The congregation comprised not a few of the most illustrious, and, with the exception of the royal family, all the highest of the aristocracy were present.

Every eye was now fixed upon Mademoiselle de Sens, because she wore a *réseau* of chenille on her head, with butterflies of every colour, made of Dresden china, which had not been in fashion since the death of the Duchesse de Chevreuse, that is to say, forty or fifty years back; the Duchess of Orleans had her hair dressed *à la débâcle*, which was wonderfully becoming to her; but this Princess being as mischievous as she was malicious, had a window opened close to her, pretending that she suffered from the heat, the consequence of which was, that the draught put every one out of temper; and the Duchesse de Saint Pierre had an

inflammation in her eyes, and Mademoiselle de la Force caught a cold which lasted till the following July. The Duchess of Orleans having perceived a slight accident which had befallen the Princesse de Carignon, who was seated next to her, had the kind attention to inform her, that one of her mole-skin eyebrows had fallen upon her knees! The Savoyarde Princesse, who was as slovenly as she was artificial, replaced it topsy-turvy, which gave her a most extraordinary expression; the younger portion of the ladies dared not look in her direction, lest they should explode with laughter, and the strict ones redoubled their attention to their religious duties, assuming a more devout aspect, in silent condemnation of the ill-timed jokes of the Duchess of Orleans, whom no one could either respect or love.

“It is her way!” said that most resigned of princes, her husband. The Dauphin told him one day that he ought not to allow it to be “her way,” but there were never any signs of his advice having been followed.

At length, a grating of hinges was heard, the iron gate of the choir was seen to open, and Madame de Richelieu, the Abbess of Panthémont, placed the novice once more in the hands of her aunt Madame de Rupelmonde, who conducted Henriette to her *prie-dieu*, where she sank on her knees, as if she would never rise again. The paleness of her face, and the langour of her whole expression, were painfully and strangely in contrast with her splendid attire.

Then was heard a murmuring sound, which arose from the other end of the church, where the livery servants had placed themselves ; the Duchess of Orleans sat watching every movement of these lackeys with her opera-glass, apparently giving great umbrage to the Marquis de Polignac, and particularly the Count de Melfort, but as the noise only ceased for one moment to break out again the next, the Maréchal de Brissac suddenly rose up to his full height, (you know that he is upwards of six feet, and wears two white pigtails,) *à l'instant même*

“Turn out those fellows in livery!” said he, in a voice that made the windows and the lackeys shake.

The “fellows in livery” moved to the door immediately of their own accord, carrying out with them a young man in a fainting fit, frightfully convulsed : he wore the uniform of an officer of the guard of King Stanislas, Duke de Lorraine, and de Bar ; it was said, that it was the Vicomte de Gondrecourt, and almost all the young nobles hastened to his assistance.

The Archbishop of Paris had kept his eyes on the ground, until the moment when the coadjutrix led Henriette to kneel at his feet ; then tightly grasping in one of his violet-gloved hands, a pair of gold enamelled tablets, he said to the novice, in a kind and gentle voice ;

“How old are you, my sister?”

“Nineteen years old, Monseigneur,” replied the Comtesse de Rupelmonde.

“You will have to answer me presently, Madame,” and the Archbishop repeated his

question to the novice, who tremblingly answered that she was seventeen years of age.

“In what diocese did you take the white veil?”

“In the diocese of Toul.”

“How?—in the diocese of Toul?” exclaimed Monsieur, loudly, “the see of Toul is vacant!” (The Bishop of Toul had been dead fifteen months, and the Chapter would not be authorised in receiving novices.)

“Your noviciate is annulled, Mademoiselle, and we must refuse to accept your profession!”

The Archbishop of Paris rose from his seat, indued his mitre, and took his crozier from the hands of an acolyte. “*Nos très-chers frères*,” added he, addressing the congregation, “it is unnecessary for us to examine Mlle. de Lénoncour upon the sincerity of her religious vocation; there is, at present, a canonical impediment to her profession; and for the future, we reserve to ourselves all cognizance of her, forbidding any other ecclesiastical the power of receiv-

ing her vows, under pain of interdiction, suspension and nullity, and this by virtue of our metropolitan rights, according to the terms of the Bull, *cum proximis*."

"*Adjutorium nostrum in nomine Domini*," he pursued, chaunting with a grave and solemn voice, and he turned towards the altar, that he might give the benediction of the Holy Sacrament.

In virtue of the admonition of her ecclesiastical superior, Madamé. de Panthémont formally opposed Mlle. de Lénoncour's taking either the white veil, or the nun's dress; she placed Henriette in a *pensionnaire's* apartment, instead of a novice's cell, and when, next morning, the coadjutrix arrived to carry off her niece, Mme. de Richelieu displayed a *lettre-de-cachet*, which she had just received, which forbade the exit of Mlle. de Lenoncour with any one, save the Marechal de Beauvau.

The high circles of Paris liberally requited themselves for their silent forbearance in the chapel; for a whole month nothing

else was talked of except the loves of the handsome Viscount and the charming Henriette—the wickedness of this Chanoinesse—the kind heartedness and promptitude of Mme. la Maréchale—and, finally, of the wisdom of the Archbishop, whom they lauded for the skill with which he had brought about this result, avoiding all scandal, and without in any way compromising the name of Rupelmonde, and without overstepping the bounds of his pastoral jurisdiction, he had cleverly availed himself of an informality, and turned it to a benevolent purpose.

Two months after this, Monsieur Tiercelet de la Barotte was ushered into the Maréchal de Beauvau's study, in whose hands he deposited the sum of three hundred and forty thousand livres, the produce of Mlle. de Lènoncour's fortune during her minority. This sum was invested in government securities, by a decree of the Grand Council, which deposed the Comtesse de Rupelmonde from the guardianship of her niece.

The surplus of Henriette's fortune was derived from her estates of Hérrouval and Bandricourt, which produce fifty eight thousand livres net, exclusive of their feudal rights. The Marèchal sent his steward to verify the accounts, and give acquittance to Madame de Rupelmonde, as he was authorised to do by the decree of the same Grand Council, which had withdrawn the privilege of Henriette from her unworthy kinswoman,

The Vicomte de Gondrecourt was a gallant officer of the Polish Guards and an intimate friend of the Chevalier de Boufflers, which is as much as to say he was not devoid of agreeable qualities ; added to this he was an indefatigable tennis player, a good horseman, a bold sportsman and a tolerable performer at chess ; he idolized his cousin Henriette, but he had an elder brother and only a thousand *écus* a year : however this drawback had not deterred the novice and the coadjutrix from entertaining the most tender feelings towards him.

There was nothing to prevent the guests

that Madame de Rupelmonde had invited for the ceremony at Panthemont, from receiving very soon afterwards the following little note :

M.

“ Your company is requested
“ at the solemnization of the marriage be-
“ tween MESSIRE ADRIEN DE GONDRECOURT,
“ Viscomte de SAINT JEAN-SUR-MOSELLE and
“ Demoiselle HENRIETTE DU LENONCOUR, Com-
“ tesse de HEROUWAL and of other places ; which
“ will take place on the fourteenth of the
“ present month of June, in the Chapel of
“ the Archbishop’s palace in Paris, at mid-
“ night precisely.

“ On behalf of the Dowager Countess of
“ GONDRECOURT the bridegroom’s mother, and
“ the Marèchal Prince de BEAUVAU, the
“ Bride’s trustee.”

The *Gazette de France* of the twenty-fifth of August contained the following announcement : “ *Madame la Vicomtesse de*

“ *de Gondrecourt* had the honour of being
“ presented to *THEIR MAJESTIES* at
“ their royal Chateau of Versailles by *Ma-*
“ *dame la Maréchale de Beauvau*, accom-
“ panied by *Madame la Marquise de Beau-*
“ *mont de Repayre* and *Madame la Prin-*
“ *cesse de Craon.*”

CHAPTER VII.

Bad beginnings—The arms and quarterings of a regicide—Royal tears—A modern Cato—Citizen toadies—Literary curiosities—Count Turpin—Filial piety—Madame du Boccage—A deadly-lively Abbè—Impudent Actress.

THE Dauphiness had been brought to bed of a Prince, and as the Court was then at Choisy-le-Roy, no member of the Royal Family was able to be present at the birth of the illustrious infant ; the courier who was dispatched with the news to Paris, was thrown from his horse at the Barrier and died on the spot ; the Abbè de Saujon, who

was to baptise it, had a paralytic stroke, and fell down on the grand staircase at Versailles on his way to the private chapel of the Palace, and to wind up all, of the three nurses engaged by his father's first physician, two died in the week, and the third had the small-pox at the end of six weeks !

“ The omens are certainly inauspicious,” said the King, his grandfather, “ and I cannot think how it happens that I have had him called Duke de Berry, for it is a name which brings misfortune with it.”

This same Royal Prince became Louis the Sixteenth !

I shall say little of the attempted regicide and subsequent trial of Damien, as the particulars are universally known, and the execution was a disgrace to a Christian country ; he was fast bound to a sort of platform of the same height as the horses who were to draw and quarter him, but they could not do it ; ultimately his shoulders and his thighs were severed by knives,

and then they left his mutilated trunk and head, the lips still speaking !

Anything more horrible was never heard of.

The King shrieked aloud, and ran away when he was told of it, and I was informed that he took refuge in the oratory of the late Queen, where Laborde found him reading the service for the dead, and praying for the repose of the soul of his assassin. The Maréchal and Marechale de Maubourg told us next day that the king would not leave his apartments, that he refused all amusement, and that he had tears in his eyes during the rest of the evening.

Talking of the Marechale de la Tour Maubourg, I must tell you that she so closely resembled the Marechale de Balincourt, that their own children were often deceived, and the Princesse de Tingry (Louise de Fay) who was at that time a young girl just leaving her convent, once mistook one for the other. As their arms and liveries were very much the same, there were continually

blunders between the tradespeople and the servants ; my impression is, that Monsieur le Marechal de Balincourt would have been very glad to have mistaken Madame la Marechale de Maubourg for his own wife ; he used to complain that his lady was cruelly unkind, and it was said that Madame de Maubourg would have been more agreeable ; “ You see how provoking she is,” said he of her, “ and yet I do not love her the less, I would not exchange her for two like her.”

He put on a look such as Cato would have worn, but the devil was not to be deceived for all that !

Some time after the death of Damien, the municipality and citizens of Amiens petitioned the King to grant them the favor of changing the name of their city to any other which it might please His Majesty to adopt ; and nevertheless they took the liberty of proposing that of LOUISVILLE. It was Monsieur Gresset, their fellow-citizen who put it into their heads, and Monsieur Nicolaí, their Intendant, took advantage of

this opportunity, to pay his court by writing letter upon letter to the members of the grand council. It happened, however, that the Bishop of Amiens, the 128th successor of St. Firmin, would not consent to the proposed alteration ; he wrote to the King, saying, that the name of his episcopal city was included in the church properties, which he had sworn to maintain, to transmit to his successor, and to protect against every encroachment.

Nicolaï then went to Paris to uphold his cause against the Bishop, and felt convinced that the steps he had taken must be most acceptable to the court. They called him before the grand council, and the King, in presence of every one, thus addressed him :

“ Last year a criminal of the name of Bourbon was hanged at Limousin, and the Intendant of Limoges took no more heed of it than I did ; how can you expect that the prelate of this old cathedral, the successor of the three S.S. Firmins, the Doctor, the Confessor and the Martyr, should yield his

rights of being *Episcopus et Vice-comes Ambianensis*? Return to your duties and let us say no more about it. I should recommend you, Sir, not to keep on bad terms with Monsieur d'Amiens ; I should disapprove of any resistance to his authority, for he has always displayed zeal in my service, and I therefore desire that you live together as heretofore, that is to say, in good fellowship."

I do not know how it is that I have not already mentioned Madame Geoffrin, nor more especially Monsieur Geoffrin, who was not for some time, sufficiently appreciated beyond the sphere of his manufactures ; he was an object of a very different kind of curiosity to what she was, and I have no hesitation in saying that in all their glass manufactory, there was nothing so curious as was Monsieur Geoffrin !

His father was a weaver at Epinay-sur-Orge, and when somebody once asked, to what the conceit and stiffness of his wife

could be attributed, the Maréchale de Luxembourg replied,

“ The fact is, she swallowed her mother-in-law’s shuttle !”

The most distinguished of her intimates was Monsieur de Montesquieu whom she always called “ Monsieur *Chose*,” because he never could recollect any proper name. She told us that one day when he arrived from Versailles and was detailing some news or other at her house, he said,

“ Oh ! the *thing* is quite certain I assure you, for I had it direct from the great *thing* who had apparently just heard from the old *thing*....”

He was alluding to the Cardinal de Fleury, the King’s preceptor !

The rest of her circle were cunning rather than witty, scribbles rather than literary. She courted the society of foreigners as much as possible, but Walpole used to say that the majority of English could not remain in her house on account of the incense of adulation (and of the coarsest kind too)

which, little as they are distinguished for the delicacy of either their feelings or habits, they were obliged to breathe there. Walpole added that he himself always felt nauseated when he entered that atmosphere of gross flattery.

Obliging as he was, he could not help complaining that Mdme. Geoffrin would insist on his adopting all her tradesmen, even to her Doctor, who was a Scotchman of the name of Tulloc.

“What have you to say against the Doctor ? have not the faculty of Edinburgh, always been considered the first in Europe ?”

“Nay,” replied Walpole, “according to Scaliger, in the year 1607, the only Doctor in all Scotland was the Queen’s, and he was a Frenchman ! he was a joiner by trade, and bled all the citizens of Edinburgh and the peasants of the neighbourhood ; the concourse of patients round his door was sometimes so great, that the halberdiers and yeomen of the court were obliged to disperse them by blows ! *there* was a fine school of medicine !”

Walpole might also have said, that at that time there were only three doctors in England, namely ; an Italian, a very clever man, and *two ignorant Englishmen, proud as peacocks, and fearfully rash in their practice* ; so says Scaliger.

Among the favorites of Madame Geoffrin was a poor Polish gentleman, Count Poniatowski, who had taken refuge in Paris to escape his creditors ; (his excellent son has been elected King of Poland.) This Poniatowski always would know, and always thought he knew, everybody in the world.

“Monsieur Danchet!” said he one day to that rhymster, “I have already the honour of knowing you ; surely I have seen you somewhere ?”

They discovered that he had made his acquaintance in the epigrams of J. B. Rousseau ;* and another time, when he was trying to recollect in whose house he had seen the President Molè, they ascer-

“Je te vois, *innocent Danchet,*

“Grands yeux ouverts, bouche béeaute.”

tained, that it was at the *Fête Dieu des Goblins*, on a piece of tapestry !

“Do tell me, my dear Madame Geoffrin,” said the Chevalier Rutledge to her one day, on his return from India, “do tell me what you have done with a man who used to sit at the bottom of your table, who ate without uttering a word, and to whom nobody spoke ; I no longer see him here, and I never knew who he was ?”

Her reply was this :

“*That was my husband ; he is dead.*”

As for the husband of the illustrious Madame Geoffrin, it is pretty well known that he never read anything but Bayle’s Dictionary, and both columns in a line, right across the page, taking no heed of the division down the centre, so that naturally enough he encountered unfathomable difficulties, but this never offered any impediment to his beginning all over again, as soon as he had finished the first volume ; the only remark he used to make was, that this philosophical

book was full of endless repetitions, and matter that surpassed his comprehension.

I have told you nothing of Madame du Boccage, author of the *Colombiade*, nor of our friend the Comte de Turpin, the translator of Cæsar's Commentaries.

Comte de Turpin de Cressé, a lieutenant-general, better known by the name of handsome Turpin, was distinguished for his military talents, his headstrong character, his natural abilities, and his eccentricities ; he prided himself on his great frankness, and with ministers especially ! but this frankness often degenerated, amongst his equals, into rudeness, and even in a manner so offensive, that interminable quarrels and duels were the result ; but in all cases, the high birth and real merits of Monsieur de Turpin, his devotion to his sovereign, his unbounded generosity, his fine noble figure, his wonderful strength, and his success in "love and war" placed him at the head of all that was brilliant and *recherché*.

Many adventures are related of his youth,

each one more foolish and bold than the other ; good luck invariably attended him, however, and the laugh was always with him ; but it could not be said that either reason or right were always on his side.

Louis the XV was very fond of the Comte de Turpin, and His Majesty stopped at his house once, (at Esgligny) for some hours on his return from hunting. The King was examining, from the terrace of the château, the meadows, which extended as far as the eye could see, and praising the beauty of the numerous cattle, which were dispersed about the pastures: "Yes" said said the Comte de Turpin, "my cows eat my grass, but they supply me with excellent milk, cheese and manure, very different to another description of animal, who lives at your Majesty's expense, and yields nothing in return."

He was always engrossed by his translation of Cæsar's Commentaries upon the Art of War ; this work consumed the greater part of his mornings, and then, as a matter of

course, it occupied his thoughts for the rest of the day ; so much so, that he talked to his friends of it, particularly to his son, who, with respectful submission, listened patiently to Commentary upon Commentary, sometimes thinking the digressions rather long. However, notwithstanding his being a married man, having his own establishment at the other end of Paris, the Marquis de Turpin used to come regularly every morning to see his father, always hoping that some lucky chance might save his having to listen to a new chapter of Julius Cæsar.

He came one morning just at the very moment when his father's valet-de-chambre was preparing to shave his master, and whilst his chin was being soaped, the old general scolded his son a little, for being so late, as he could have read him the chapter on Catapults, which he had finished the night before, and of which he was sure the Marquis would very much approve ; the young man expressed his regret that he had

not been able to come earlier, so the session was adjourned till the next day.

“.....Though if you would only wait a quarter of an hour, my beard will be finished, and I can read the chapter to you.”

“*Mon père*, I have made an engagement with Monsieur Gontaut, who is waiting for me in the *Champs-Élysées*, as we are to ride at three o'clock.”

“Very well then, we must defer it till to-morrow.....but, my good friend,” said he, fixing his eyes on his son, “you have not shaved to-day!—how can you have the face to go out in such a state? I cannot have you seen with yesterday’s beard upon you, like a scavenger!—take off your neckcloth, sit down in my chair, and Francisque will shave you; in the mean time, I will read you my chapter on the use of catapults in sieges!”

Now for a few lines of biography on that honorable, discreet, and scientific personage, Marie-Anne-Eléonore La Page de Mautort,

widow of an honorable character, Henri Ficquet, Sieur du Boccage.

I know not why I have placed Madame du Boccage next to the Translator of the Commentaries, for they certainly bore no resemblance to each other. She had one of the higher order of intellects, was perfectly beautiful, with nothing belligerent or masculine about her ; in short she was the most sincere and gentle shepherdess of the Arcadians. Voltaire assured her one day, that her letters were superior to Miladi Montagu's ; he might have added that that was paying her no high compliment, for I give you my word that after the letters of Madame de Sevigné and Madame de Maintenon, I never read any which seemed to me more witty or more attractive, than those of Madame du Boccage. Most of her works have been translated into Italian, Spanish, English, German, and above all, into Polish, but her letters written from Rome are, in my opinion, her best composition, and I doubt not posterity will highly appreciate them.

There are some beautiful pieces in her *Colombiade* ; in her tragedy of the Amazons too, and her poem of Abel, we find great talent, and noble sentiments, well expressed, in short, wonderful simplicity and modesty pervade all the works of this celebrated woman.

Fontenelle used to say, that she was like a beautiful and well regulated watch, the machinery of which performed its part with perfect precision, whilst the dial, as well as the flower-enamelled case displayed no trace of anything that was going on within.

“ Why,” asked Voltaire, “ do you not also notice those two holes for the watch key with diamond pivots ? they would do for the eyes.”

“ Oh, I do not carry my talent for metaphorical descriptions so far as that,” replied Fontenelle, “ but I know you of old ! you will give me the credit of this high flown simile, and you will then go and tell everyone that I compared Madame du Boccage’s beautiful eyes to the holes in a watch ! It

will not be the first time you have paid me the same kind of compliment ; however, do not distress yourself : make use of the little reputation for wit which I may possess—it is at your service !”

It would be impossible to express how annoyed, jealous and miserable Voltaire was at the fame of Fontenelle. Alas ! where is Fontenelle’s renown to-day ? It has passed away, like that of Madame du Boccage, and I believe that in fifty years after his death, Voltaire’s glory will be obscured.

For forty years Madame du Boccage lived exalted on a pedestal of Fame at the top of Mount Parnassus, in the midst of an atmosphere of pindaric incense. She was universally extolled, and always had been the object of empyreal adulations ; so had Monsieur de Marigny, during Madame de Pompadour’s protection, but they received all with a modest and retiring simplicity.

People used to say that they were rather too fond of each other ; but be that as it may, every one loved and esteemed them,

except your aunt du Guesclin, who always blamed me for my easy indulgence in that respect.

“ The fault is more yours for imagining any wrong,” said I in reply, “ where there is no guilt apparent the sin is the suspicion, at least so says Tertullian.” A holy woman was that countess, I do not deny, but she was a crabbed one ! Imagine her having refused to let her daughter, now Madame de Gèvres, marry the Marquis de Lesmaisons, because (four years back) he had some love affair with the Demoiselle Camargot, of whom more anon. *Mon enfant*, how can it be otherwise ? The most devout bears the impress of Original Sin, as well as others, and all that piety can effect is to smoothe down those natural defects, which it is impossible to eradicate. HE who willed that the canker-worm should be generated beneath the brightest flowers, has permitted austerity to produce intolerance, and sometimes the affectation of virtue, which I like still less ! Mde. du Boccage had inspired the author of *Manon Lescaut*, the Abbé Prévost d’Exiles, whom she

could not endure as a lover, with the most violent passion for her ; I have met this Abbè Prévost two or three times in the course of my life, but he lived in great retirement, and never went any where except to his two friends, M. Riquet and M. Huguet. He was a tall man, with a taciturn expression of countenance, and a melancholy voice ; he was tolerably well dressed for an author of his day ; strange stories were told of him, one in particular, that he ate Spanish snuff with melon, which the Dowager Duchess of Orleans used always to do, and which moreover I saw Marèchal Saxe do, at the grand dinner given to him at the Hôtel de Ville, at Paris, after the battle of Raucoux. I never heard that the Abbè Prévost had killed his father, unintentionally or otherwise ; and after all the opprobrium with which he was assailed, I am sure that such an accusation would not have been omitted, if he had been guilty of it.

The worst that I know about the Abbè Prévost is, that he died in a horrible manner. He had been seized with apoplexy in the

bourg of Rougemont not far from Chantilly; he was carried to the house of the Curé of the village and the Bailiff arrived as in duty bound; this unlucky justiciary sent for the attendance of the Surgeon of the Abbey, to proceed to the opening of the body, that the deposition which he was to draw up might be as complete as possible. He was not dead, and died under the knife! There was always something awful in the sinister glances, dismal tones, and whole physiognomy of this wretched man.

As for the *Demoiselle* Camargot, her name was once very much noised abroad with that of Madame du Boccage, by whose side the girl had had the impertinence to go and seat herself at the *Académie Française* on Saint Louis's day, where every one was expecting the Cardinal Passionéi, who however never arrived because he happened to die that morning.

The position of Madame du Boccage was painful to a degree, and so distressed did she appear at so great an humiliation, that

M. le Maréchal de Belleisle went and presented her his hand to conduct her (for want of any other place) to the vacant arm chair of the Bishop de Senlis, where, after numerous curtsies, she had the distinguished honour of sitting amongst the forty immortals, and between the Messrs. de Nivernais and Bitaubé.

She always spoke of it afterwards with an air of becoming humility, and infinite gratitude to the Academicians.

The newspapers of the day were full of this adventure, and also of the Demoiselle Camargot who, however, had been as much embarrassed as Madame du Boccage, and never forgave herself. In the course of a few months she was obliged to leave the stage, for she could no longer appear without being hissed.

They always gave Mademoiselle Camargot credit for having been the first person who ever wore shoes without heels. She ended her career by shutting herself up with the Magdalens (*Aux Filles Repenties*) in the *Rue Saint-Jacques*.

CHAPTER VIII.

Impossibility of Atheism—Sceptics are *lunatics*—M. de Caylus and Belzebub—How the latter ill-treated his visitors—De Lauzun's tale of horror—Curiosity punished—A Lodge of Balsamites—Apoplectic termination of M. de Caylus's career.

It has been said, and with justice, that there does not exist, nor is it possible there should exist, a single instance of real Atheism; and for this reason, that they who miscall themselves Atheists, are but proud sceptics who deny everything. This could never induce conviction, for they who would overturn a belief established on the dogmas

of science, or religious submission, must produce a *negative* equivalent to the *affirmative*, or it would be deficient in decisive authority, unless it were mathematically demonstrated, or founded on natural experience. Thus, Atheism is but a *doubt*, and never can be a *persuasion*.

In the disposition of men who will believe nothing, as in those who are strong in faith, there is implanted by Nature an irresistible impulse to believe something—I mean something concealed and mysterious; men are so conscious of their original weakness and of the presence of bad principles within them, they are so anxious to believe in the existence of good principles, and of some power formidable to them, and yet to which they can turn for support, that the only effect Voltaire's systematic impiety has produced, is, to carry forward the natural principle of faith to other objects of belief.

You will perceive that the period when philosophical incredulity flourished the most, was most productive of the blindest credulity

in the power of raising up spirits, apparitions, divinations, and other juggleries of the most barefaced charlatans. They refused homage to their Creator, and they vowed eternal fidelity to the moon !

M. de Caylus, (whom you must not confound with his uncle, the antiquary) was a very zealous disciple of the new sect. [He had had the satisfaction of holding some communication with Beelzebub, and when he swore, (a bad habit which he could not repress even in good society) it was always "*By Satan's Heart!*"

He once took your father, Monsieur de Lauzun, Monsieur de Fronsac, and the Duc de Chartres with him to the quarries at Montmartre to show them the Devil, but as they were entering the cavern, they were assailed by such a shower of blows from bludgeons, that the four gentlemen were covered with bruises and plaisters for nearly a month afterwards.

They were not otherwise ill-treated, for they were not robbed. Lauzun told me

that the blows were as if dealt with a flail, directed from a very narrow dark passage which they had to cross before they reached the quarry ; at a great distance off they perceived the feeble glimmering of a lamp which appeared to be suspended from the top of the great cavern, and that was all they saw at that time.

The *Gazette de France* announced that Monseigneur the Duc de Chartres had had a fall from his horse, and that he had struck his head against a post in his riding house. The Duc de Fronsac kept his bed, with curtains and shutters closed, but this was no alteration from his usual mode of life. I told the porter at my gate to say, in answer to enquiries, that your Father had been to see the Devil and that he had not yet recovered the visit, which neither surprised nor distressed me much. Lastly the Duc Lauzun said nothing. nor would he have anything said about it, although he went everywhere as usual, and when the Dauphin questioned him as to why his arm was in a

sling and why he had black patches on his face, his reply was,

“What is that to you?”

This answer completely suited his purpose, by turning off people’s attention, for everyone was astonished at it.

He used to call me aunt, on account of his marriage with my niece de Boufflers, the grand-daughter of your Aunt de Luxembourg, *née* de Villeroy.

“Well aunt, I have seen him,” said he one day, “I have seen the devil!”

“Is he still at Montmartre, *mon garçon*? how do you find yourself after the visit?”

“*Ma tante*, it was last Friday night, at the Duke de Chartres’, and Madame Agnès de B..... wept like a water-spout.”

“Good Heavens! is it possible a young woman like her can boast of such an intimacy?”

“That is no concern of mine, but I think I might venture to say, that you have too much consideration for this Comtesse Agnes; Madame de Genlis said, when speaking of

her, that she was like that butterfly in her father's cabinet, called the great coquette, whose only merit was its beauty."

"Never mind the ill-natured remarks of Madame de Genlis; tell me about the devil."

Lauzun then related, with gravity and simplicity, what made me shiver, for his veracity was thoroughly to be relied on, and he was not at all in the habit of telling stories, * * *

* *(two pages of erasures here.)* *
* * * *

* * * * and that having placed upon the table a crystal bowl in which a toad was swimming about, this horrible person, for Lauzun could not guess whether it were a man or a woman, knelt before the table, and said tenderly to the toad; "Dear Angel! beautiful Angel! hear me, hear me, hear me!"

The animal then began to jump about in

such a manner, that the water was dashed out of the bowl all over the Duc de Chartres, who turned livid thereat, and hastily wiped his face.

Then began the invocations, and every one present was enjoined to fall on their knees, which Monsieur de Lauzun, for his part, refused to do, alleging that that position made him ill. Some knelt down, following the example of the Duc de Chartres, others remained standing, taking care

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They saw appear at the end of the room," continued Lauzun, "without any noise and in a most incomprehensible way, the naked figure of a man; he was somewhat above the ordinary stature, his complexion beautifully pale, and his eyes intensely black; he had curly hair, a broad chest, finely proportioned limbs, and his beard was short and curly;

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the end of this wonderful appa-

rition was the burst of a loud voice, but without any signs of articulation being visible.

Lauzun never would tell me what Satan said to them, but it transpired through the Duchesse de Gévres, from whom Monsieur de Caylus never concealed anything, that it was the following words, uttered between pauses long enough to affix a meaning to them, and, to my shame be it said, they have often recurred to my thoughts.

.....VICTORY AND MISERY.....VICTORY
AND MISERY.....MISERY... ..

It will be seen that the tripotage, or if you will, the political intrigues of the Palais Royal, were not strangers to these extravagant and profane hoaxers.

There is a very distressing account of the last adventure which befel Monsieur de Caylus, and of the circumstances which appear to have accelerated his death ; here is the story, such as I heard it from his cousin and friend, the Duchesse de Gèvres.

Monsieur de Caylus was mad about making

proselytes, and Madame de Gévres was very anxious to see the Connètable du Guesclin for the sole purpose of obtaining some information with respect to a treasure which was supposed to exist under the ruins of Plessis-Bertrand, (one of their *châteaux* in Brittany.) I know not how it is, but in most old families there is always an idea of hidden treasure.

The Duchesse de Gévres was an enthusiast and very inquisitive; the treasure at Plessis-Bertrand occupied a large portion of her thoughts, but the negotiation was long and difficult, inasmuch as M. de Caylus required beforehand, that she should submit to certain preparatory ceremonies of initiation, which were repugnant to her conscience.

“We cannot proceed to work the invocation, until you become one of us,” said he.

“If that be the case then,” she replied.

“I shall never see Bertrand du Guesclin.”

And there the subject dropped for the time. It was always M. de Caylus who returned to the charge, and I should never

have understood why the Balsamites attached so much importance to affiliating Madame de Gèvres, if it had not been for her fortune and her credulity.

After a warfare, which lasted from fifteen to eighteen months, of sophistry and discussions, refusals, mutual recriminations, and skirmishes mixed with serious irritation, M. de Caylus announced that he had at length obtained the Grand Cophte's permission to allow Madame de Gèvres to assist in the invocation of the genius of metals, without that profane person being obliged to take any vows upon herself; so it was arranged that she should pass by the Champs Elysées to the house of Mme. de Brunoy,* *Rue du*

* Louis XV111 conferred the quality of a French Duke on the Duke of Wellington, with the title of DUC DE BRUNOY. "It is the name of a place associated in my recollection with that of some of my brightest days, and that is the reason why I have made choice of it for you," said H. M.

(*French Editor's Note.*)

F. M. the Duke of Wellington is *not* DUC DE BRUNOY. He is Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, but not a French Duke.—(*Translator's Note.*)

Faubourg Saint Honoré, and it was one Friday night that they had selected for this redoubtable mystery.

Exactly at midnight she arrived at the door of a pavilion at the extremity of Mme. de Brunoy's garden, she being at the waters of Barège with her brother, the Baron d'Escars. Behind an iron gate she saw a person standing perfectly still ; he advanced and said, *Jéna*, she replied, *Jéna* ; the gate opened ; he further advised her not to express any surprise and especially no disapprobation, " Or you will be the cause of my death." She recognised the voice if not the figure of M. de Caylus, whom no doubt she had previously promised not to give utterance to any expressions, which might disturb this assemblage of adepts. She told me that whilst walking up the shady walk that led from this pavilion in the Champs Elysées, to the house, she felt so nervous, so painfully oppressed, that she was obliged to stop and sit down on a grass bank.

" I am afraid ; I will not enter that house

—“I want to go away,” said she starting up and turning towards the pavilion.

“It is too late,” replied her guide in such tones of consternation, that she was more disquieted than ever.

“The gate is now guarded by another person ; your only means of exit is by the *Rue du Faubourg Saint Honoré*, which you could not gain without passing through the house. You will compromise.....you will expose us.....you are devoting me to inevitable calamities !”

In short, more dead than alive, she suffered herself to be led to the door of the boudoir, which is at the end of the long-walk ; she entered, complete darkness reigned therein ; M. de Caylus knocked mysteriously at the door, marking each knock distinctly, like masonic phrases which are constituted by the number and the pause between the blows. An answer was returned from within on the same place and by the same tokens ; to these he again replied, and said hastily to his timid companion :

“The responsibility of bringing you here, I have taken upon myself—forget not that!”

The door which had been the medium of communication opened suddenly, a most dazzling light filled the room and Madame de Gévres now perceived two tall figures entirely wrapped in red draperies, who held naked swords in their hands, with the points directed to her.

“What does this mean?” she exclaimed. “Have you brought me among cut throats?” and in the outburst of her feelings and a fit of cowardice, which took away her senses for the time, she was on the point of rushing headlong, shrieking aloud, into the midst of the blaze of lights! This handsome apartment was Madame de Brunoy’s bedroom, the relation and intimate friend of Madame de Gévres, so that she was perfectly acquainted with all its localities and outlets; it was brilliantly lighted, but there was nobody there; it was probably used only as a waiting room, for the neophytes; the furniture—

was exactly in its usual place, and the only thing that you would have observed as being unusual was, that the door which communicates with the large drawing-room and which is close to the windows, in front of the boudoir door by which Mme. de Gévres entered so abruptly, was concealed by a long curtain of rich brocade, not corresponding at all with the furniture in the room, nor with the hangings of any other room in the house. It was a sort of brocade with a blue ground sprinkled with gold stars and cabalistic characters in frosted silver. On each side of this door there were two gilt tripods, which supported large cups of agate, or rather veined alabaster. The said cups were filled the one with magnificent fruits, pine-apples, peaches, oranges and grapes, branches with red fruit, ears of corn, maize and other vegetable productions ; the other with gold and silver coins, *pêle mêle* with pearls and precious stones, real or false (this concerned the enlightened alone). Observe, if you please, that these two large vases were

placed so close as just to allow space to pass between, and on the floor before the door was a large crucifix, which it was impossible to avoid walking on in passing to the drawing-room.....An unknown man, clad in a parti-colored robe of black velvet and azure satin, came into the room by the door of the boudoir, and without saying a word to Madame de Gèvres, he endeavoured to lay hold of her hand to lead her to the Hall of meeting ; the brocade curtain was drawn aside and the door was open, and exposed to view a confused crowd of people strangely attired, who were drawn up in two lines with great precision, one on each side of the gallery.

“ Let go my hand ; whom do you take me for ? ” exclaimed the Duchess, with the determined courage and proper pride of a Du Guesclin, “ where do you mean to conduct me ? do you imagine that I am going to walk upon the crucifix like a heathen ; rather than tread under foot that sacred image and the Holy Cross, the sign of our redemp-

tion, I would suffer a thousand ills!—Leave me alone!—keep off!”

The valiant nature of the man gave way ; he hesitated a minute or two, and then returned to the great room ; Mme. de Gévres instantly took to her heels, and fled by a bath-room, which opened on a corridor, contiguous to the grand hall. She there found that the three doors which opened on the court-yard had been carefully locked. The Duchess was obliged to effect her escape over the balustrades of one of the windows, and she dropped one of her shoes ; wrapping her foot in her handkerchief, she then ran along the pavement of the avenue to the porter's lodge, where they were all asleep.

“ Open the door ! open the door ! ”

“ Who goes there ? ”

“ It is I. ”

“ Who are you ? ”

“ The Duchess de Gévres. ”

“ Come, that will not do ! ”

The debate would probably never have been concluded, if the porter's wife had not

thought she recognized the voice of Mme. de Gèvres, in whose service she had lived.

The Duchess would not confide any of her mis-adventures to Mme. de Brunoy's people, who had not the least suspicion of what was going on at the end of their avenue. All that they knew about it was that their mistress had given orders that the keys and apartments should be placed at the disposal of M. de Caylus, and they were to keep the rooms he made use of in order ; but he did not avail himself of them, and there is every reason to believe that the illuminati only occupied those on the side of the Champs-Elysées ; nor have I any hesitation in saying that Mme. de Brunoy was perfectly ignorant of the unworthy purposes to which her house was put.

In the course of the next day, we heard that M. de Caylus had been seized with a tremendous fit of apoplexy, at M. de Lauzun's little house, in the Rue du Roule, near the Champs-Elysées ; he was carried from thence to the Hôtel de Comminges, Rue de Grenelle,

opposite the Hôtel de Créquy. Some of our people went to see him, and they reported that he had turned as black as a negro. As he had no near relations in Paris at the time, it was nobody's business to have a medical opinion as to the nature or cause of his death. Mme. de Gévres was confined to her bed with a raging fever, and did not hear of it till it was too late to speak, (because the coffin of this wretched adept was placed in a church at Rovergne, in the height of the dog-days, in a temperature of twenty-four degrees.)

It is useless to tell you why the Balsamites were suspected of having caused the death of M. de Caylus. Many a romance has been built on this story, with, of course, the embellishment of the most wondrous exaggerations; but you may rely upon my version of it, and test my veracity by an appeal to Madame de Gévres herself, to judge if this is not the whole of the adventure. For my own part, I look upon it, as something merely rather extraordinary and tolerably tragic.

CHAPTER IX.

Cagliostro and the Balsamites—Hydromancy—The Templars—Free-masonry unveiled—French Revolution originated in the Lodges—*Georges Smith's* opinion—Jacques de Molay.

Joseph Balsamo, who went successively by the name of Comte de Mèlissa, Commander de Belmonte, Chevalier Pelegrini, and, lastly, Comte de Cagliostro, was rather an awkward looking man, badly dressed in blue taffetas, laced at all the seams, and with his hair dressed in the most ridiculous fashion, that is to say, braided and powdered, and then divided into two tails.

He affected to speak the worst possible French, especially before people whom he did not know. He wished to be thought the natural son of the Grand Master of Malta, Don Manuel Pinto d'Alfonseca, but he was really the lawful son and heir of an advocate of Messina, Marco Balsamo by name, who was overtaken by justice in 1748, because he had extorted eighty ounces of gold from the Prince of Moliterna, by promising to discover and put into his possession a treasure buried under a pyramid, and guarded by the infernal genii.

Nothing certain is known of the early years of this Thaumaturgist ; and the work published under the title of *Histoire de Cagliostro*, contains nothing that can be relied on. He had lived in Paris under the name of the Comte de Tischio ; he was compromised in a prosecution sustained by the M. de Chastelet, the heirs of Madame d'Urfé, against the Italian, Casanova, which obliged him to quit France, and it was only on his return from Germany, some four or five years

afterwards, that we first heard of the name of Count Cagliostro, who had displayed a profuse liberality, and had performed some miraculous cures at Strasburg.

The object of the principal superstitions of the sect of the Balsamites was metalurgy, necromancy, cabala, and onierocrisy ; that is to say, the four least difficult and most common parts of the philosophical belief in the science of prestige, and the heart of divination. In his treatment of metals, Cagliostro followed the school of Paracelsus and Borri, which are well known. His elixir of life, which I had analysed by a chemist, was purely composed of aromatics and potable gold, as was the elixir of longevity of Nicholas Flamel, or Saint Germain. His cabala was a Hebraic calculation, called samaritan ; his practice, with regard to the raising up of spirits, was that of the Cophtes, as described in the Amorrhean book ; and his interpretation of dreams was as devoid of rules, as was that of Lucaccio Borrodina ; so that Cagliostro had added nothing to the magic

art, nor to the juggler's, if we except his dignity of Grand Cophte, which gave him the power, they said, of transmitting the faculty of hydromancy.

This Balsamite proceeding was as follows ; a pupil called a dove, that is to say, an innocent young girl, was placed before a crystal vase full of pure water, and, by the imposition of hands of a Grand Cophte, she acquired the power of communicating with the genii of the intermediate region, and of seeing in the water, all that interested the person, who desired the revelation.

I saw, very much against my will, this operation of divination performed in the prison *Des Carmes*, with regard to the Comte de Beauharnois, when a child of seven years of age, the daughter of the jailor, looked into the water and described accurately each particular of the execution, up to the very instant that his head fell by the guillotine. Madame Buonaparte cannot have forgotten this awful instance of revelation ; but it was a scene of '93, and we are not talking

of that now. On such occasions, I advise you, *mon cher enfant*, to bear in mind that marvellous saying of the calvinist Bayle, the king of the sceptics. "There is often in things of this sort much less of the wonderful than weak minds believe, and much more than strong minds will allow."

The Cardinal de Bernis was not far wrong in attributing our political agitations and the first crimes of the French Revolution to the hatred and vengeance of the Protestants exiled under the reign of Louis XIV. From that it may be inferred, that if the French Calvinists had it in their power to deal blows so dangerous to the tranquillity of the State, Louis XIV had good reasons for banishing them from the kingdom. But admitting that a handful of traders, scattered over the surface of Europe, could transmit to their descendants the thirst for blood with the power of shaking empires, it could always be objected that King Louis XVI had *revoked* the revoke of the edict of Nantes; unfortunately for us the exercise of calvi-

nism has become so perfectly free, that M. Necker, a calvinist and a citizen of Geneva, had been a King's minister several years previous to that period, when catholic priests were strangled at the abbey.

M. Burke was persuaded that the existence of the grand revolutionary association might be traced beyond the fifteenth century. But without entering into the proofs which he has given, by enumerating the crimes and condemnation of the Templars, we will pass on to that which was found amongst Cagliostro's papers, with regard to the institution of free-masonry.

The Grand-Master of the Templars, Jacques du Bourg-Molay, who was executed in 1314, and whose family is still in existence in Nivernais, had created, during his captivity in the Bastile, four *loges-mères*, namely: for the East, Naples; for the West, Edinburgh; for the North, Stockholm; and Paris for the South.

The day after the execution of the Templars at Paris, the chevalier Nicolas d'Au-

mont and seven other Templars, *disguised as Masons*, came and collected the ashes of the victims who had perished at the stake. Fifteen days after that, the chevalier Usquin de Florian, who had denounced the Order, was assassinated on the *Place d'Avignon*; Pope Clement Vth had him buried in great state, and pronounced him “ a venerable servant of God ;” but it appears certain that the Templars carried off his body, and deposited in his tomb the bones of Jacques de Molay, which they recognised, or thought they had, by their large proportions. Then the four lodges which he had instituted, organised themselves, and all the Templars took an oath to *Destroy the Power of the Pope, to Exterminate the Race of the Capetians, to Annihilate all Kings, to Excite the People to Revolt, and to Found a Universal Republic.*

That their designs might be entrusted only to men who were to be relied upon, they established preparatory lodges, under the names of Saint John and Saint Andrew,

societies without any secrets, the advantages of which are, even to the present day, that they operate as a blind, and afford the chiefs of the Free-masons an opportunity of becoming acquainted with subjects who may be useful to them in the association. All the forms and ceremonies used in these lodges are allegories borrowed from the proceedings and execution of the Templars ; but they are only explained openly to those who have attained to the sixteenth step ; they assemble continually in these lodges only to impress the importance of equality, benevolence, and fraternity ; the real Templars or *Jacobins* scarcely ever attend there, and their meetings are called *Chapters*.

There are four chapters in Europe ; each one is composed of twenty-seven members, and they are established at Naples, Edinburgh, Stockholm and Paris. The word is, as it is known beyond a doubt, since the inventory of Cagliostro's papers, and the seizure of the registers at Naples, *Jackin Booz Machenac B. Adonai* 1314, of which

the initials are those of the words *Jacobus Burgundus Molay beatus anno 1314*. Their other words are Kadosch, which means *regenerator*; Nekom, *vengeance*; Polkhall-pharaschal, *who puts the profane to death*; when they arrive at their meetings they go through the feint of stabbing one another; that they may recognise each other, they wear a gold ring with red enamel; when they enter a lodge, they alone have the right to walk across the space in front of the throne, and those among the other Free-masons who do not know them, must never inquire their names.

At the beginning, weak, without money, without power, the successors of the Templars occupied themselves only in searching for the treasures buried by their founders. They have recovered much in Italy; there ought to be still some in the Island of Candia, but that Island is under the dominion of the Turks, which, however, is no great loss to the Christians.

It is a remarkable fact, that it was at the

period when masonic lodges were first founded, that the famous Rienzi appeared, who ended by summoning the Sovereign Pontiff of the Emperor of the East before the tribunal of the Roman people. He possessed influence sufficient to render him formidable to these two powers, and Rienzi ought to be accounted amongst the most illustrious of the Templars.

The heads of the lodges hold the principle, that every man capable of a great action, ought to become one of their number whatever may be his station, his country, or his religion ; but according to their statutes, a crime is never to be committed unless it can tend to the great aim of the institution, in fermenting, directing, or ministering to popular seditions, so that their members are found among Musselmans as among Christians, among the highest as among the lowest ranks of the people and the law by which they are governed is always called *constitution*.

Their signs and emblems are those which

the French revolutionists have adopted. The tri-colours are those of the free-masons ; the level, the square, and the compass denote equality, unity, fraternity ; the acacia, the tree held sacred in their rites, and which, according to the masonic precept, *never flourished, except when moistened with blood*, is our tree of liberty ; there is no device adopted by the revolutionists, even down to the red cap, which is not found in some of their ceremonies, and this emblem of the regicide was one of the presents made to Cromwell on the day of his installation.

It was thought capable of proof, that Brockaghiff, Masaniello, the Duc de Mayenne and Lord Derwent-Water were initiated in the mysteries of the temple ; but it is certain that (they were during the minority of Henry the VI.) England was troubled with free-masons ; for, in a statute passed in the year 1428, the Parliament forbade their holding chapters under a penalty of fine and imprisonment.

On occasions of great importance each

chapter always sends a travelling member to visit the other foster-lodges, and if Cagliostro came from Naples to visit Paris, on the occasion of that collar affair, it was principally that one of the initiated might be close to the French court, ready to conspire against it. Driven from Paris, Cagliostro wished to found a lodge at Rome; he was accused before the apostolic tribunal, found guilty of several crimes, and condemned to death; but Pope Pius VI commuted his punishment to imprisonment for life. He died in the castle of Saint-Lèon, in 1795, aged forty-two.

An extract of the proceedings instituted at Rome, published in 1791, and the confession of Cagliostro have brought to light the connection that existed in the upper ranks of free-masonry, with the French Revolution. There have been found amongst the effects of Thomas Ximénès, and also among Cagliostro's valuables, sundry crosses, on which the initials, L.P.D. were inscribed; and these two adepts afterwards allowed

that they meant *Lilium pedibus destrue*,
TRAMPLE THE LILY UNDER FOOT.

The taking of the Bastile was the commencement of the French Revolution ; and it has been supposed that the French members determined on its destruction so eagerly, only to show their power to the other chapters, and because it had been the prison of their founder.

Avignon soon became the theatre of the most frightful cruelties ; many of the initiated declared that it was because that town belonged to the Holy See, and that it contained the ashes of Molay ; however, Avignon, as is well known, is one of their most flourishing colonies, and the masons of the '*comtat venaissin*' have always been the most numerous, the most active, and the most *enlightened* of any.

In the years subsequent to the taking of the Bastile, the adepts of Paris held their chapter in the palace of the Duke of Orleans, their grand-master, and it was there that the Duc d'Aiguillon, Lepelletier, Clootz,

the Abbé Sieyes, Mirabeau, Robespierre. etc., arranged the draughts of his plans, which were handed over to those who were admitted to the second order, to translate into philosophical and revolutionary language. If all the statues of our Kings were overthrown, it was chiefly to get rid of that of Henry IV, which was erected on the site of the martyrdom of the Templars ; it was invariably the case, that the revolutionists presented petition on petition, to have erected on this spot, and no where else, a colossal statue, treading under foot crosses crowns, and diadems.

The King of Sweden was an ally of Louis XVI ; at the period of his departure for Varennes, Gustavus advanced to the frontier to receive the illustrious fugitive, and to cover his retreat ; the Swedish Monarch was assassinated by Ankasticeum, an alluminated free-mason of the first degree. But as every Templar *can govern but not reign*, you observe that the Duke of Sudermania, master of the foster-lodge of the North, imme-

diately entered into an alliance with the French Jacobins, deprived the Swedish nobles of most of their privileges, and laboured incessantly, to diminish the prerogative of the young King, whose uncle and guardian he was.

To attain the goal, to which the initiated aspired, the partizans of the Duke of Orleans had manœuvred since 1787, that they might place him at the head of the state. But Robespierre remarked, that the bare fact of a change in a name was not sufficient, so the grand-master of Paris was sacrificed.

If the gazettes of Germany, England, and of Italy, are to be believed, the Emperor Leopold was nearly being poisoned by a mason *grand-elect*, his valet; and we read in the *Journal des Jacobins* of that time, under the article *correspondance*, that this man had confessed his crime, and declared that several considerable sums of money had been remitted to him in the name of the Duke of Orleans, grand-master of Paris. At the same period, a criminal was hanged

at the *Campo Vaccino*, at Rome ; his face was concealed by a mask, and the executioner placed the following inscription at the foot of the scaffold : **THUS DOES THE JUSTICE OF OUR LORD PUNISH FREE-MASONS.**

Many judicious writers, and Georges Smith in particular, have unquestionably proved that the Templars were the founders of freemasonry, and the least intelligent person admitted into their ranks, cannot doubt this fact, however slight his knowledge of the history of the order may be, if he only observe the ceremonies made use of at his reception.

It was the writings of a sophist, his predecessor, and the ignorance of his times that suggested to Jacques de Molay the elements of his wonderful system ; his idea was, that in organising a society of men, subservient to the same passions, having the same end in view, and guided by one common interest it would in time overthrow all hereditary institutions, and, in the end, engross all power in itself. Jacques de Molay was

the first victim of his own corrupt system : he was denounced, and perhaps calumniated by his accomplices, by those who probably were themselves aspiring to the mastership of the order ; but his doctrine has survived, and *catholic* governments have, at last, been made to understand what was the intention, the importance, and the dangers of these combinations.

CHAPTER X.

A *charming* man ; showing the advantage of a good appearance—Disastrous consequences of having a Princess in love with one—Souvenirs of Mme. D' Egmont—A gallant miser—Love in a stage coach—Thereby *hangs* a tale.

THE Greeks were so exceedingly susceptible with regard to personal appearance, and so enthusiastic about beauty of face, form, manner, and other external advantages, that the magistrates of the areopagus were never allowed to listen to the pleadings of the Athenian lawyers except in total darkness.

and this was in order that they should neither be prejudiced in favour of a handsome orator, nor imbibe disagreeable impressions against the adversary. There has often been said to be a certain resemblance between the Athenians and the Parisians ; however, be this as it may, I have seen in my own times, something approaching this Grecian infatuation for personal beauty, and what I am going to relate, may, perhaps, justify the rules and precautions of the attic legislator.

Lancelot-Marie-Joseph du Vighan, Seigneur de Létorières and de Marseille was a gentleman of Saintonge, who lived from hand to mouth, but as he was what was called *charming*, all the good things of this world were soon placed at his disposal. He had found that the classes were too long, and the vacations too short, at the College of Plessis, where his Uncle, the Abbè du Vighan had had him received gratis, so he left without saying anything about it, and launched himself on the *pavè* of Paris, tak-

ing his own way and living in a garret. When he was cold or hungry he went out and walked about to divert his attention, and he was the happiest creature in the world.

His friends, La Ponpelinère and Boulainvilliers often related a story of his having gone out one winter's day in a pouring rain, and taken shelter under a *porte-cochère*.

A hackney-coach passed, and the driver looked at him and stopped.

"Shall I take you across the street, Sir?" said he.

"No," answered the handsome student, mournfully and for substantial reasons.

"If you are going further I will convey you ; tell me to what quarter your business leads you?"

"I was going to walk in the galleries of the Palais-du-Justice, but I will wait till this rain ceases."

"But why?"

“ Because I have no money. Leave me alone.”

“ Sir !” exclaimed the coachman, jumping from his box and opening the door, “ it shall never be said that I allowed so handsome a gentleman to get wet and catch cold for want of four-and-twenty sous ! it is all in my way to pass by the Palais-Marchand, and I will put you down at the statue of St. Peter.”

As he opened the door of his coach opposite to this famous *traiteur's*, he respectfully took off his felt hat, and requested the youth to accept a louis d'or.

“ You may find in there some young gentlemen with whom perhaps you would like to make up a little party ; the number of my coach is 144, and you can repay me whenever you please.”

This man ended by becoming coachman to Madame Sophie of France, at the recommendation of him to whom he had been so obliging.

He was an honest and worthy person

Sicard by name, and when people spoke to him of his good deed towards M. de Lètorières he answered that any one in the world would have done as much for him, "for," added he, "he was so charming a person, that one might have taken him for a *good angel* !"

Another time the wife of his tailor got quite out of patience at his owing them four hundred *livres*, and began to taunt her husband with being so weak and yielding with regard to *Monsieur le Charmant*, which was the nick-name they had given him.

"You never have courage enough to attack him ! but I am going out to change this note of a hundred crowns, and by foul or by fair means I shall bring our money back with me ; charming as he is, I shall soon settle him ! you have only to leave it to me and see if I do not bring him down !"

When this boasting lady returned home, her husband asked her how much she had got from *Monsieur le Charmant*.

“ Now do not laugh at me ; I found him playing the guitar, and he was so polite that I had not the heart to torment him !”

“ And the note of the three hundred *livres* ?” asked the tailor.

“ My good friend,” replied the scolding housewife, “ you must add even the hundred crowns to your account, and it will make twenty-nine louis instead of four hundred livres. He looked so melancholy, that I do not know how it was, but I left them on his chimney-piece in spite of all he could say !”

As soon as M. de Létorières had attained his twentieth year, he took his testimonials of nobility to Monsieur Chérin, in order to obtain the certificate necessary for his presentation, and as soon as he had deposited his parchments upon the *Architable*, he went to walk in the gardens of Versailles, where the King saw and remarked him.

Some of the courtiers informed themselves about this handsome young man, and the King said to his Counsellor Chérin,

“What is the family of a gentleman of Poitou, called M. de Létorières?”

The Counsellor replied that he could not ride in the King's carriages because his testimonials were not quite.....

“He is *charming*!” exclaimed this good prince, interrupting the genealogist, “and I wish him to be presented to me under the title of Viscount.”

Chérin inscribed his certificate *by command*, and M. le Vicomte de Létorières received the honors of the Court.

Amongst the foreign princesses settled at the Court of France, was a young beauty, innocent and artless as possible, who had been inspired by M. de Létorières' eyes with sentiments which threw her family into despair.

This Princess was Mademoiselle de Soissons, Victoire-Julie de Savoie-Carignan. A thousand annoying things were said, and the Maréchale de Soubise, her aunt, at last succeeded in having her shut up in the Abbey of Montmartre. The most punctilious and

respectful forms were observed with regard to the Princess Julie, but she was a prisoner all the same, and guarded by an officer of the provostship of France.

They suspected a correspondence ; they intercepted a message ; they discovered a coil of rope : in short the Baron d'Ugeon, one of the Rohan-Soubise family, wrote to M. de Létorières and called him out ; the meeting was postponed in consequence of the illness of Louis XV, whom our Galaor of Saintonge had obtained permission to attend during his attack of putrid small-pox ; this privilege greatly offended the people about the court, because he had never had the *entrée* to the royal apartments.

The King died, and his nurse then hastened to meet the champion of Savoy, who stabbed him in two places in the right side with his sword. They dressed the wounds of M. de Létorières ; they prudently closed his door against every one, and they gave out that he had caught the putrid infection, which was neither true nor difficult to make

the public believe. Seriously as he was wounded, this did not prevent his scaling the walls of the Abbey of Montmartre, two or three days afterwards, to have an interview with Mlle. de Soissons under the great arch which leads from the cloisters to the cemetery.

It appears that the Princess had prudently retired before daybreak, and the unhappy girl never saw her handsome friend M. de Létorières again! His wounds burst open afresh, and all the remaining blood in his body escaped during the night, for of course he would not call for assistance.

He expired alone and untended, and the next morning he was found extended on the cloister pavement, stiff and dead!

Perhaps it was on the very stone that covered the grave of my poor friend Mme. D'Egmont! Having been brought up at the Abbey of Montmartre, she had requested to be buried, as a favour, by the side of Mme. de Vibraye the friend of her childhood, and a dignitary of this convent; it

was in a spot which recalled all the peaceful and happy thoughts of her youth ; it was on these stones and above these vaults that she had so often and so lightly trodden ! and now, lead, and boards, and iron rings, enclosed in the damp and narrow ground, under a few feet of stone.....Poor Septimanie !

This horrible affair was hushed up.—Even in death he was beautiful ! They wrapped him in a winding-sheet ; he was carried to his bed, and they gave out, that M. de Lètorières had died of the smallpox.

I passed by Vendôme on my way to my estate at Gastines, and halted at the little town which the Chevalier de Créquy had selected as his domicile, apparently on account of the cheapness of provisions. I saw him five or six minutes, and that was quite sufficient ; but I heard such stories of his stinginess, that would have made me blush had he been thorough-bred !

He had thirty thousand écus a year, and the mean wretch never went in any but

public carriages, when his fine airs of gallantry made him brisk and acceptable to the belles of the coach, all in an honorable way, and closed purse-strings of course! Would you believe that he himself went to fetch the old body of a berline, which he had shut up for four or five years, in the Bishop of Chartres' coach-house, and that after the first change of horses, he had it tied on to a cart tail, and dragged to the last stage before Vendôme, for the price of about twenty-four sous.

Eight days after, he joined us at Montflaux, perfectly unattended, and by the coach. It appeared he had made acquaintance on the journey with an honest and discreet young woman of Mans, her name was Mme. Lescombat: "What, have you never heard them speak here of Mme. Lescombat? She is so graceful and well-mannered, that one would say she was a lady from Paris; her modesty and gentleness are quite delightful; she is always remarkably well dressed, and I observed that she looked very carefully

after her little bandboxes ; in fact, she is perfection itself ! I shall go and see her at Mans, in about two months time, as soon as my cure is effected, and I have taken my baths ; she gave me her address, and I shall make a journey on purpose to see her. The stage-coachman told us that she was at least fifty years old, but she is not the less pretty for that !’

So he set off for Mans, as soon as he had cured himself, and had gulped down more grapes (other people’s, not his own) than all the school boys in the holidays, or all the foxes in the country put together, without mentioning thrushes. He returned to Mont-flaux three days after, appearing very much depressed in spirits.

“ And Madame Lescombat,” said your father, “ did she not receive you politely ?”

“ Alas !” said he, “ I have not seen her, and you never heard of such an adventure as I have met with ; I arrived at Mans ; I asked for this lady’s house, they laughed in my face ; I persisted, and found a poor

beggar-man, who led me to her door ; a pretty house, in truth, with a balcony in the street ; but all the blinds were closed. I began to feel uneasy ; I knocked at the door, then I beat against it with all my force. At last, a big servant-girl appeared, and she told me, if I wanted to see Mme. Lescombat that I had not a moment to lose, and that I must go to the *Place des Croixpilliers*, at the other end of the town. It appeared that they were just going to hang her, for having murdered her husband. —Perhaps, at that very instant, the rope might be round her neck !”

CHAPTER XI.

Géneviève Galliot and the Prince de Lamballe—
The Dowager Duchess of Orleans—A portrait—
A confidence—A secret marriage.

THE young Prince de Lamballe was endowed with good sense, he had received a good education, he possessed a retentive memory and he lacked not wit ; but it was a sort of serious wit, which we used to say he could well dispense with. He was benevolent and beneficent ; he had all the advantages and disadvantages of a determined character,

which always strikes me as being a dangerous gift, and terrifies me when I behold it in a young and inexperienced man. He was well-made, tall and stout ; in his face you read his character, excitable, generous, passionate, sincere. His eyes were not both of the same colour, which gave him an extraordinary expression ; in other respects, he was as good-looking as it was possible to be with red hair.

The Prince de Lamballe from the perfect education and the solid instruction which he had received, had retained a profound respect for religion, as also a natural partiality for the forms of society ; which speaks of itself for his horror of scandal : but above everything else, he had ever entertained towards his father a veneration mingled with tenderness and awe.

I do not show him all the tenderness that I feel," said M. de Penthievre to me one day ; " it is necessary that he should fear me ; if he could imagine the extent of my love, and all my inward struggles, and what violence

I am obliged to do to my feelings to conceal my tenderness for him, he would love me all the more, I am aware ; but he would have lost the fear of displeasing me, which is a most salutary restraint upon him ; and he would acquire too great a confidence in himself. Ah ! my dear friend, if you did but know all I suffer, and how painful an effort is this daily self-denial. I say to myself, it is for his essential good, it is for his happiness that I thus torture myself"—(and here the worthy man shed tears,) " but if I did not love him so well I should never have the courage. If I did not, as the apostle says, put a guard upon these lips which open so naturally to speak words of paternal love and joy to him, and if prudence did not stiffen these arms which long to open and clasp him to my heart, he would be astonished at the depth, almost amounting to weakness, of my affection !"

The Duc de Penthièvre had given his consent, though fearfully and reluctantly, I assure you, to the marriage of his only

daughter to the Duc de Chartres, who became successively Duke of Orleans, Anglomane and patroit, democrat and terrorist. The father of this unfortunate Princess had frequent cause to reproach himself for the deference which he had shown on that occasion to the wish of the King ; for there were no end to the acts of kindness showered on the unworthy and wicked family of Orleans by the grandsons of Louis XIV.

The Duc de Penthièvre never encouraged the antipathy with which M. de Lamballe naturally regarded his brother-in-law, but when any one had courage enough to speak of his son-in-law according as he deserved, in presence of his son, one could see that the Duke listened with an air of painful unconcern and grieved assent.

Afflicted sister !—injured wife !—mother of many griefs ! often shall I have occasion to speak of you, inconsolable Princess, mournfully and with tearful eyes ! amiable and virtuous daughter of M. de Penthièvre, you, whom I sometimes called my daughter,

and who, with such sweet confidence, always called me mother, in those tones of tenderness which you inherited from your father, artless, affectionate and true.

Monsieur de Tessé was a great patron to the painter Greuze, and he sent him to me once, that he might show me his pictures.

Those which he brought me consisted of a rural scene, which had been bought by M. de Penthievre, for five hundred louis, and of several paintings, fancy portraits, I imagined ; amongst the number, was one, the head of a young girl, the expression of whose face was so beautiful, so noble and so holy, that I wished to purchase it to place in my oratory, as a kind of " study of an ascetic ;" but—it was a likeness.....it did not belong to the painter.....and Greuze appeared annoyed that the picture had attracted my attention.

There was something mysterious in his confused answers,—he did not quite know... he could not exactly say...and the idea that I should never see this enchanting face again

almost grieved me ; I felt a sort of painful, melancholy sensation, such as some romantic young girl might experience in seeing for the first and last time, a handsome young man, whose name she did not know, and by whom she had not had the consolation of being even noticed !

M. le Duc de Penthièvre was announced, and he bought the large painting without even asking the price ; (Greuze was convinced, and very justly, that he would not regret the purchase ;) but S. A. S. entreated him to make him a copy of the picture which I fancied, and so courteous and persuasive was the request, that it reached me exactly on the eve of my *fête*, that is to say, a fortnight afterwards.

I thanked the obliging and anonymous donor of this arch-angelic portrait, and immediately exhibited it to the view of my *faithful*.

Two or three days afterwards, I was writing in my oratory, when a visiter was announced, whom I understood be M. de

Pombal. I begged that he would wait for me, and in about a quarter of an hour, I rose to join him, without having rung for them to open the doors for me, since I had only my room to cross. I had always strength enough for that exertion ! (The Queen told me that Mme. de Maurepas said to her one day :—" The Dowager de Crèquy, Madame !—she is as courageous and firm as a dragon !—if the bells in her house were out of order, she is quite equal to open her folding doors herself, without assistance, and I am sure that she would think nothing of blistering her hands.) I arrived, then, at my drawing room, (the door of which was open) without making any noise, because, as you know, I never take up my carpets.

There I saw, not M. de Pombal, the Portuguese ambassador, but M. le Prince de Lamballe, whose eyes were rivetted on this female head with so strange an expression :....

" My dear mother ! who gave you this portrait ? how does it come here ?"

“ Monseigneur, ... M. le Duc de Penthièvre gave it to me !”

“ My father ?—did you say my father ?” and he fell flat on the ground, without time for staggering or turning pale.

My first care was to close my door, and I allowed no one to come to his assistance, except our faithful Dupont, his wife, and their nephew, because they were trustworthy people, and I dreaded the circumstance becoming known.

The fainting fit terminated in so violent a hemorrhage that all his dress, particularly his cravat and waistcoat, were covered with blood, so much so, that I was obliged to send to the Hôtel de Penthièvre for a fresh suit.

I tried to restore and console the poor young prince ; I loved him as though he had been your brother ! he wished to spend all the rest of the day with me, and so denying myself to every one, the following is the history he confided to me :

“ You know that in my childhood, and

often during my country walks with my tutor, I often used to run away. When I felt myself at liberty, my heart bounded for joy ! I used to go and hide myself in our beautiful woods ; sometimes I sat myself down by the side of a brook, and then fell into a reverie ; or I would enter some hovel to eat brown bread and milk ; I would stop to chat with some old peasant, or I followed the humble funeral of some poor labourer, walking behind the relatives of the deceased, as far as their village burial-ground. As soon as they perceived me and looked at me with astonishment, I ran off. I overheard my father saying one day to the Abbè de Florian : ‘ We must let him alone ; if we scold him he will perhaps go so far, that we shall have some difficulty in finding him again. He is actuated by a feeling of roaming and of liberty, of which he does not know what to make, but of which nevertheless he does not make a bad use ; as for instance, yesterday he went and said his prayers in the evening with the hermit of

la Chesnage. Look well after him, but I forbid his being punished.'

"I fancy I was at that time twelve or thirteen years old ; but those words of my father's, spoken in that kind voice, which you know so well, made a great impression upon me. I played the truant not nearly so often ; I feared to make my father uneasy and to abuse his kindness : I was always obedient to these good principles ; but after I had yielded to my impetuous nature and to my feelings of independence, I reproached myself for it and I became unhappy and disquieted, which was not the case before.

"One fine summer's evening, as I was returning from one of these excursions, I stood still upon the rocks of Thymérale, not far from our château of Anet. I dare say the reason was to look at the sun-set ; but I saw a charming little girl, leading a goat, pass close by me ; and as the poor child had not strength to make the obstinate and frisky little animal obey her, and as she would not

let go the rope which held it, she was dragged over some sharp pieces of rock, where I saw her fall—I rushed to her assistance, and I saw that she had cut her forehead ; I wiped her pretty face with my handkerchief, and her tears inflicted a wound upon me. She smiled upon me through her tears ; I shall never forget her angelic smile, and I think I hear her now saying in her child's voice, in tones radiant with happiness and gratitude : ‘ It is nothing at all, nothing at all ! ’ I wished to subdue the capricious animal and to lead it for her ; I seized the rope, which broke ; I pulled off my scarf, and led the goat in triumph, when in turning the corner, I found myself face to face with my father, who was going to take a walk, and he had numerous attendants with him. I was taken aback at first sight, and then I related faithfully and simply my adventure.

“ My father desired one of his gentlemen to accompany me. “ Go, my son, I shall not scold you for what you have done to-

day, said he smiling ; “ M. de Fénélon did more than you have done ; he was seen in his canonicals leading a great cow which had escaped from the poor widow’s stable.”

“ The little girl had not courage to approach, so that she heard nothing of what my father was saying.

“ The mother of Geneviève Galliot was ill with a disease of the chest, and the poor young woman died of it a few months after. She was the widow of a ploughman who worked on one of our farms, and he had been killed by a bull. He had the reputation of being a respectable young man and the best looking fellow of the principality. All the possessions of Remy Galliot’s widow consisted in their cottage, a little garden with fruit-trees, a few bee-hives and an acre of land sown with barley and rye. She would have gained her own and her daughter’s livelihood with her spinning-wheel, but her complaint prevented her working. You will excuse these particulars that I am detailing

to you of this poor family, and do not be surprised.

“I told Baudesson, that was the name of our gentleman, that I felt very tired, and I begged of him to go and fetch the carriage, and I would meet him at the turn of the road which led to Fresnoy ; for so was the little hamlet called. All that I had in my possession was one *Louis d'or*, and I informed Geneviève's mother, with an embarrassed manner, being conscious of I know not what instinctive feeling of confusion and of delicacy towards her daughter, that it was my mother who sent her that piece of gold, and that she would not let her want for anything. She began by overwhelming me with her thanks, and then she asked me who my mother was. I must confess I was greatly puzzled by this very natural question, which it was so easy to foresee ; it appeared to me that my answer would either raise up a formidable barrier or undermine my footing with this poor family and

I answered her, stammering and looking down on the ground, that my mother's name was Modéne, and the sick woman remarked languidly to her daughter: "There are so many people about here that we do not know!"

" ' We live so far from the town ! ' added the young girl, with an expression of gratitude and friendship which made my heart swell.

" Geneviève Galliot did not fail to return by the rocks with her goat, and I took care to be there on the following day, and every day after that, till the end of the autumn. I had only to get over a little park gate. I was there almost always the first ; I brought grass for the goat, who went home quite distended. We used to make chapels and cabins with branches, and bouquets and garlands with the wild-flowers. I said to her once : " ' Geneviève, there is some money for your mother, and I will make you a present of a beautiful gold cross. ' "

" ' With a silver heart ? ' " said she, bursting with joy.

“ With a gold heart like the cross ! I love you so much, my Geneviève, I love you so much, that I would give you all I have, or shall ever possess !”

“ ‘ Oh ! so would I, Monsieur Louis ! but I have nothing to give you !” and she looked quite sorrowful.

“ I remember that one day she made me a present of a nosegay of pale yellow cowslips, which she had gathered in the woods for me. I have always preserved that nosegay ; it is locked up in a casket, which contains all that I value most : a prayer written by Saint Louis, a relic of the real cross, a letter of our ancestor Henry IV, a pearl bracelet with my mother’s portrait, lastly, some of my sister’s hair, with Suzanne Faure’s wedding ring, and the cowslips, presented to me by my young, my first friend, my beloved Geneviève !

“ One day, it was towards the end of October, she came not to the rocks, where I had waited for her till the evening. I returned to the château as the night closed in, in a

state of feverish agitation ; I allowed myself to be undressed as usual, and went to bed and I got up again, as soon my two valets had left me. It was hardly ten o'clock, but as my parents were at Rambouillet with their establishment, there was only a sufficient number of servants left at the castle to attend upon me, and I flattered myself I should be able to leave my room without rousing them ; at all events, no one there had any authority to detain me.

They had never known me commit any foolish or unreasonable act ; all the domestics of my father's establishment loved me much, and feared me a little ; finally, my tutor was playing at backgammon in my outer room with the Abbè de Florian, which prevented their hearing me open my window ; I descended by grasping all the projections and ornaments on the walls of the tower with my hands, feet, and teeth ; I then gained the little gate which opened on the Thymérale, and I darted out of the park, bounding like a deer !

“I do not know how it was, but it gave me no surprise to see lights in the cottage where, at that hour of the night, in winter, and in a village, Geneviève and her mother should have been sleeping in darkness..... Nothing, however, seemed to me extraordinary, because Geneviève had not come to the rocks of Thymérale, and you know when the heart is troubled, one thinks of nothing but one's-self.

“I stood more than a quarter of an hour gazing over the hedge of their little garden, at the cottage door ; I dared not approach it, and could I but wait till the next morning, I was sure of seeing her and she would tell me the cause of her absence. She was there—I was close to her ; and the beatings of my heart were stilled. It required it ! The heart of a man had been throbbing within my young breast, and I thought it would have burst ! now, however, it seemed to me that I had nothing to wish for, nothing to fear, and to be perfectly happy,

I had only to remain where I was till day-break.

“In course of time I perceived the door opening ; a little old woman emerged with a light, which she had much difficulty in protecting from the wind ; I saw her come near the hedge that separated us to cut some branches. I know not what dark ideas flashed across me, but I followed the old woman into the cottage. Geneviève—for I thought but of her, and I saw only her—Geneviève was kneeling at her mother’s bed, to whom the old curè of Rouvres was administering extreme-unction. I came and knelt beside her ; but Geneviève scarcely looked at me, and when she did it was almost with indifference. Her eyes were rivetted on the pallid face of her parent, in painful contemplation, wretched at the unexpected bereavement which she was about to sustain.

“The good old priest commenced reading the prayers for the dying—*Mon Dieu !* how beautiful are the prayers for the dying !

have you ever heard them, *ma bonne mère* ?”

“ Go on with your story, *mon cher enfant*,” I replied, “ and do not turn off my attention from your sorrows, by reminding me of my own afflictions.”

“ I was absorbed,” continued M. de Lamballe, “ in the awful sight of a dead person ; it was the first time I had ever witnessed that most beautiful sight on earth, the death of a christian ! The scene was in a solitary cabin, where the north-wind moaned and came in whirling and puffing even to the flames on the hearth, and the rustic door rattled and so did all the little panes in the lattices ; within was a poor villager breathing her last on her bed of green serge, two children, a country priest, and a peasant-woman holding a branch of holly ; but when the sick person ceased to breathe, and the man of God rose from his knees, and said with something more than human authority, as it appeared to me :—‘ I absolve you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; fly, christian

spirit, and return to your Creator.' I thought the Heavens were about to open, and I exclaimed in a loud voice : Amen ! The curé, who had not perceived me before, turned round and said to me, ' Is it you, Monsieur ?'

" Yes, it is I, my good sir," I replied, pressing both his hands. " Do take charge of Geneviève ; take her home with you, *Monsieur le curé*. I beg of you ! I will defray all expenses myself ; you will take her away with you, that she may not be left all alone here, will you not ?"

" The old curé of Rouvres, who is now Prior of Anet, was one of the most simple-minded and charitable—in fact one of the best men that ever lived. " I will willingly take charge of this poor little orphan," said he, " without any pecuniary consideration. I know not that I should have thought of it ; but the directing hand of Providence influences our operations, as Saint Thomas has said ; and I consider that the great directing Hand has brought you here to-night.

to recommend Geneviève to my care at the moment of her mother's death, by the side of all that remains to us of this holy woman ; for her soul is in the presence of God, monseigneur, and she was a paragon of virtue !”

“ Geneviève smiled once more upon me, through a deluge of tears ; she was not at all surprised, nor did she rejoice at knowing who I was ; she always knew that I was a gentleman, and my title of Prince enhanced me no further in her eyes.

“ She wished to remain by her mother's body, but I made the good old woman convey her to the presbytery of Rouvres, as soon as the curé had quitted us ; for he had been sent for by another sick person to the other end of the parish. It was not without difficulty that they induced her to leave the cottage, where her pallet still lay by the widow's bed-side.

“ I had said that *I would have her go* in such a firm voice, that the old woman thought it best to obey me, and the young

girl was all surprise. The fact is, a complete revolution had taken place in me since I had taken upon myself the charge of Geneviève ; I had become all at once a man, powerful by my will, and I can assure you that from that moment, I have never had, since I was fourteen years old, a single childish thought.

“ When I found myself alone with Suzanne’s dead body, I was at first quite unable to pray : it appeared to me that I had to act up to, before anything else, another sort of obligation more urgent still, and not less binding upon me. ‘ Oh ! rest in peace ;’ said I to the lifeless clay, ‘ rest in peace ! I love your daughter, I love your daughter ! I will guard her and love her as the angels of Heaven are loved, and with them your spirit will watch over us both ! I will marry her’—(I said this in such deep and manly tones, that I was surprised myself by it, and my own voice made me tremble, as though I had heard some other person speak ;) . ‘ I will marry Geneviève,

Geneviève Galliot, your daughter. I swear it on the holy cross, which I apply to your lips, and I felt my heart melted ; I was completely overcome ; I fell on my knees by the side of the bed of death, and devoutly raising her hard-worn hand, I bestowed on it a filial embrace.

“ Poor Suzanne Faure, widow Galliot ! I have kept the word I pledged to you, and the name of your daughter’s husband is Louis de Bourbon, Prince de Lamballe and de Corentin !

“ You do not know me, Marquise de Créquy, as well as my father, whose native modesty you are aware of, but you do not know how much simplicity there is in my heart ; so much so, as to make me doubt that I was born of a royal race.”

I begged that he would not fall into philosophical declamations, or the magniloquence of a student. He related to me the funeral of Suzanne and the good education that Geneviève had received, the history of their loves, and how that their secret marriage

had been blessed by a chaplain of the Palais-Royal. You may imagine how very lengthy the confessions of a young lover were likely to be ; to relate all the details would be an interminable work, and it is not necessary for me to repeat them, for this portion of M. de Lamballe's story was exactly like a novel.

He married then, this peasant girl, without the knowledge of the Duc de Penthièvre of course, but ably assisted by the Duke of Orleans, who had not omitted to calculate that the children of a clandestine marriage could never be considered as rightful descendants, neither could they inherit the immense fortune of M. de Lamballe, whose sister the Duke of Orleans had married, consequently the Duchess must become heiress to M. de Penthièvre. Sordid and calculating creature ! you will soon see to what an extent he carried his baseness.

“ Look at the portrait of Geneviève, and tell me what you think of it.”

“ I cannot answer that question, Mon-

seigneur ; I cannot approve of your conduct and I see no use in blaming you. You know that you may rely on my discretion, particularly, when my word is passed ; but your father !—have pity on the grief of your father ! the grief of a prince !—Suppose the Duke of Orleans were to betray you ? suppose the King, the head of your house, should separate you from this young girl whom you have taught me to love, although I know her not, because I am certain you are to be believed ; you are true and loyal, a real French prince.”

“ I love her !” he exclaimed, beating his breast, “ I love her, and shall always love her with all my soul. I love everything belonging to her, even to her inferiority of birth ; when I think upon the distance that might be said to divide us, I love her if possible more tenderly, more passionately ! Every thing relating to her family too has become dear to me, and if I told you that I have had the bodies of her father and mother exhumed, and that they are buried,

in the church of Anet, between the mausoleum of the Duchesse Diane and the cenotaph of Henry II.....but I confess, if the parents of Geneviève had not been worthy people and highly respected in their part of the country I might have hesitated, or, at all events, it might have given me great grief.....I hardly think, even now, that I could have endured any humiliation of that kind !.....but public scorn cannot reach.....I mean if they dared to attack the wife of my choice, she whom I will, and whom I ought to defend, I would rise against all obstacles of rank and blood ! but the King is not a tyrant, Madame, and the Duke of Orleans is a coward."

" True, Monseigneur, but he is a traitor !"

" For the rest," he pursued energetically, " I know my father and I know you ; should persecutions overtake us, it is to you I should confide my wife, and you would be the first to plead for me !"

CHAPTER XII.

All not gold that glitters—Domestic misgivings—
A snake in the grass—Cruel conduct of a brother-
in-law— A bed of sickness and despair—Poor
Geneviève—Death.

MONSIEUR DE LAMBALLE had hoped for happiness, but he had not found it. The exigencies of his rank, the difficulty of not attracting the notice, and perhaps curiosity, of a numerous establishment, the dread of alarming and distressing his father, the fear of rousing the attention or ill-nature of a crowd of idlers, not reckoning the certainty of drawing all eyes upon Geneviève in

leaving her to be seen in Paris, even if it were only in a church, in short, the difficulty of concealing her by keeping her a prisoner there, as well, perhaps, as that feeling of uneasiness and love of seclusion which always follows an ardent attachment, all this determined the young prince to establish her quietly in a small country house at Clamart-sous--Meudon which he had purchased from M. Bouret de Valroche, consequently M. de Lamballe went as often as he possibly could to his father's *château* at Sceaux-Penthièvre.

Madame de Saint-Paër (a name derived from lands belonging to the principality of Lamballe, and by which Genéviève was called) Madame de Saint-Paër began by fancying herself happy, and certainly if perfect love could have procured perfect happiness she would have enjoyed it, but, as everything in this world is disposed according to complete order and general harmony, so it is that we cannot interfere with the systematic arrangements of Providence without bring-

ing down discomfort or sorrow on ourselves and others.

“The occupations of the Duc de Penthièvre, the prudence of the Prince de Lamballe, and the duties of his station, obliged him to be in Paris and Versailles several times during the week, so that he was either prevented going to Clamart at all, or else he was only able to remain there ten minutes. Madame de St. Paër wrote every morning and sometimes twice a day to her husband, who had no trouble in receiving her letters because they reached him through the post, but for the Prince de Lamballe to send a letter to his wife entailed such a host of manœuvres and precautions, that there was no end to the difficulties.

“A letter put into the post in Paris was not delivered in the neighbourhood till the third day, and amongst all M. de Lamballe’s servants there was only one in whom he had sufficient confidence to send to Clamart. The brother of this man was footman to Mme. de St. Paër, and to prevent their imagining

anything against her honour, M. de Lamballe had thought it right to communicate to them the secret of his position. If this was imprudent, it at all events proved the high moral principle and delicacy of his upright heart.

“The sweet Geneviève, now Madame de St. Paër, soon found herself obliged then, to pass interminable days in solitude. You will say that her situation bore but the semblance of desertion, but how melancholy it was!.....Uneasiness soon succeeded ennui,A handsome young man and a Prince!an angry father, a powerful and perhaps vindictive family!.....Temptations for him, trials for her, and then, doubtless, desertion and forgetfulness!.....At last the unhappy girl sighed and wept without ceasing. During the absence of her husband it was because he was not there; when he arrived it was because he must go away again, and when she received no letter from him, he was undoubtedly either a prisoner, ill, or

he no longer loved her! The Prince was miserable, both about her and himself.

“Suffer and be patient” was my advice to him, “we never violate the obligations of our station with impunity; so much for you, Monseigneur; and as for Geneviève, that weak and innocent creature whom, had you loved so devotedly, you would have shunned, and from whom you would have fled, instead of making her the unlucky present of your hand and heart, know, my dear child, that when one is displaced from one’s proper sphere, one is sure to be unhappy! It is the same with social beings as with the brute creation; neither can live out of their element. You must add, therefore, to the state of Geneviève’s feelings, all sorts of mortal fears and anguish!.....You have thought but of yourself, my Prince; you thought you were performing a generous act of true love in marrying a village girl, and you have only committed one of selfishness! In short, you are a man, my dear friend, a

true man, and, what is more, a lover of the highest rank ; you have thought but of yourself, it is the way of the world, and it is but a stronger proof that you are of the blood-royal."

M. de Penthièvre told me one day, that his son had had the misfortune, as well as the weakness, to submit to a reconciliation with his brother-in-law ; that he knew that M. de Lamballe had supped at the gardens of Mousseau, and that it must have been in very bad company, for the party consisted of five or six men of the set of the Duke of Orleans, with as many ladies of the set of Mlle. Duthé. I would not believe it ; but the father of the young Prince added in a melancholy manner, that he was brought home in a deplorable state ; that he kept his bed during eight and forty hours, and that his health still suffered in consequence M. de Penthièvre also declared that the Prince was in a fearfully depressed state of spirits, and that he would not leave his room.

The postman perpetually brought him letters or notes with the post mark of Sceaux, and he had been painfully affected by the illness of Champagne, one of his people..... This young man, who was at the head of his stable department, was his godson, and a favorite, as well as his confidential servant; and M. de Penthièvre added, that his son sent, at least ten times a day, to know how he was.

In consequence of my not being able to return the confidence of M. de Penthièvre, I suffered as much as he once had done, when he restrained himself from responding to the filial affection of his son; but I had promised to keep the secret: I trembled lest it should accidentally escape me; and my feelings became so visible, that he said to me with an air of surprise and alarm:

“How constrained you are in your manner to your best friend! You are concealing something!—”

“You have said the truth,” I sobbed; “ask me no more, but tell your son that I will come and see him to-morrow early.”

That which remains for me to tell is as difficult to relate, as it is deplorably calamitous, I will, however, try to describe it, with an attempt at resignation, without bitterness, if possible, and without animadverting upon the Duke of Orleans. He has been rewarded according to his works. When he yielded up his soul, he was in a state of intoxication!.....he has appeared before the tribunal of his judge; he has satisfied divine justice: alas! that is more than enough to calm and appease all the hatred and vindictive passions which he excited.

After encouraging his brother-in-law to contract an illegal marriage, this man had coolly calculated that the Duc de Penthièvre was becoming old; that his heir, the Prince de Lamballe, was precisely the same age as himself, the Duke of Orleans; (they were both born in 1747, and within a few months of each other.)

The Chancellor of the Palais Royal had boldly declared before M. de Fourcy, that the Prince de Lamballe was declining, though he

was strong enough to live some time ; which was a great pity, seeing that the Duke of Orleans would infallibly find himself, by the death of M. de Lamballe, the heir to all the fortune of the Duc de Penthièvre, who was himself far from well. M. de Fourcy, councillor of state, and also M. de Monthyon, *chancelier* to MONSIEUR, and brother-in-law to M. de Fourcy, can answer for the truth of this ill-natured speech.

As this familiar friend of the Duke of Orleans had not explained himself clearly enough to give the idea of a secret marriage, people had entertained different ideas with regard to it ; and it was always asserted that this wicked man saw in the life of the Prince, the only obstacle between the avarice of his master and the enormous wealth of his relation.

There had been an open rupture between them for many years, which annoyed the Duke of Orleans, not only on account of what the world might say, but because it attracted the attention of the King, and above all

things, because the Duc de Penthièvre refused his mediation between his son and his son-in-law, a reconciliation which he in no way desired, and which at most, he would have tolerated, without approving.

The Duchess of Orleans often told me that she never could conquer this reluctance in her father, and she was so innocent and amiable, that it grieved her deeply.

The Duke of Orleans made use of spies for every purpose, and at all times, but notoriously with regard to the Hôtel de Penthièvre and the two Princes of that illustrious house. By these means he had become informed of the attachment of the Duke of Rambouillet, as he was then called, to the daughter of a peasant; he did not fail to gain his confidence, and hypocritically smoothed all the crooked paths which could lead to their marriage; for he had the marriage of his brother-in-law celebrated at his own house by the almoner of his own chapel, the Abbé Maguire, and the Duke of Orleans himself chose to be one of

the witnesses of the act, by which M. de Lamballe was probably disinheriting himself.

Some time after this, his spies brought him the intelligence that the young bridegroom did not often go to Clamart, and that Mme. de Saint Paër was consequently very jealous. He concluded, (he whose imagination was so vicious) that M. de Lamballe was already tired of his wife, that he would abandon her, that the *dénouement* would take place immediately, and that as a natural consequence he, the Duke of Orleans, would find himself, thanks to the indiscretion of Geneviève's husband, a prey to M. de Penthièvre's anger, to the displeasure of the other Princes, and out of favour with their Majesties, before whom he always appeared under the mask of the most punctiliously faithful subject and the most submissive of courtiers, even, one may add, obsequious.

It is needless to tell you of the seductions that were made use of to attract the Prince

de Lamballe to Mousseau, my spirit revolts at it!

It appeared that some noxious drug was infused in the liquors, which the Duke of Orleans caused to be served to his brother-in-law, who had the habit of eating and drinking in company, as he did at home, hastily, and without noticing what he was swallowing—

* * *

(There are here two pages carefully scratched out, so as to be perfectly illegible.)

* * * *

They were also base enough to intoxicate his faithful attendant, Champagne, and they took care to render the servant as incapable of leaving his bed, as was his master. This, we ascertained, was for the purpose of cutting off all communication, epistolary or otherwise, between M. de Lamballe and Mme. de Saint Paër. It is possible that the Duke of Orleans might have conceived a

passion for Geneviève, and such was the opinion of Mme. de Tessé, who may be supposed to be an authority ; but for my part I know not what to think, but I am inclined to believe that he was actuated solely by his wish to injure M. de Lamballe, and not from any criminal predilection he may have entertained towards Mme. de Saint Paër.

Culpable and disgraceful as would have been such a love, I do not suppose that Philippe Egalité had other views than to gratify the hatred excited by avarice and envy.

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The Prince was confined to his bed at the Hôtel de Penthèvre, where I found him sunk in the gloomiest depths of grief. His thoughts were at Clamart, but he was totally without strength to rise. He had received (somehow or other) a letter from Mme. de Saint Paër, it was wild and heart-rending. They had not seen each other for a fort-

night ; she could bear the suspense no longer, and was coming to seek him at the Hôtel de Penthièvre ! He thought his best plan was to write harshly : “ I forbid you, Madame, to come here ; the honour of a Prince is concerned ! ”

“ What have you done ? ” I exclaimed ; “ ought you to write to Mme. de Saint-Paer in those terms ? — The honour of a Prince indeed, would you preserve it at her expense ? — What fearful and lamentable interpretation would she not put upon it ! ”

The Duchess of Orleans here entered, and there was an end to our conversation ; she informed us that her husband also had been taken suddenly and grievously ill, and the dear Princess believed it too, although there was not a word of truth in it. The object of the Duke of Orleans in feigning illness is apparent enough.

I called on M. de Penthièvre, and there I found the Princesse de Conty. They were talking of the Duke of Orleans being ill, which did not prevent his giving many sup-

pers of fifteen to twenty persons in his rooms, and passing the rest of the night round a gambling table. This Princess could not repress her indignation at his conduct. He had won, three days before, from her son the Count de la Marche, whom they had intoxicated, sixteen thousand *louis* ! in fact both the grand-mother and the father-in-law of the Duke of Orleans were distressed beyond measure at his conduct. I listened in silence, fearful lest if I began, that I should say too much, and I returned home, sick at heart, with a presentiment of something dreadful about to happen.

M. de Penthièvre wrote to me next morning to say that he could not come to see me, because he was unwilling to leave his son, as his complaint seemed to have assumed quite a new feature ; that all night long he had been delirious, and that now he had fallen into a drowsy state of stupor : Bordeaux was getting alarmed, and had already sent for Poissonnier, Lassuse and Bitauime to consult ; and they were debating whether

they should not send for Bouvard ; in short Bordeu apprehended a brain fever. M. de Penthièvre had the goodness to add that his doors would be open to his daughter and to me only.

Ten minutes after, Dupont came and announced to me, in a strange manner and with a nervous voice, that young Champagne's elder brother, who was in the service of the Prince de Lamballe, was waiting in the anti-chamber, and begged that I would allow him to see me, as it was an affair of life and death ! It was Mme. de Saint-Paër's *valet-de-chambre*, who burst into tears and told me that his mistress had poisoned herself ! He had come from the Hôtel de Penthièvre, where of course he did not see the Prince on account of his illness. His brother was at the infirmary ; so, being aware of the union between the Prince and Mme. de Saint-Paër, and knowing how intimate I was with the Duc de Penthièvre, to whom he dared not mention anything, this man bethought him of coming to me.

“ You have done perfectly right,” said I ; my mind was very soon made up ; I sent for Baudret, my own surgeon who was fortunately at home ; he arrived, and twenty minutes after that, we were at Geneviève’s bed-side.

Her maid was quite distracted ; she had called in all the village to her mistress’s assistance, and the room was full of curious people, upon whom my arrival seemed to make a great impression. I availed myself of that to get the house cleared, by begging them to go for a priest ; but one of them, a scrivener I believe, replied that perhaps *M. le curé* would refuse to come, considering that the poor lady had caused her own death. I told them to leave me alone with *Mme. de Saint-Paër* ; and when my people interfered, giving them to understand, proudly, that I was the Marquise de Créquy, of whom they had never heard, they retired submissively.

“ Ah ! Madame ! How exceedingly good of you ! Is it you, Madame ?” and that

was all the beautiful and sweet Geneviève could utter, whose days I would have prolonged even at the expense of mine own. Alas ! it was too late ; the poison she had swallowed—and how she found means of obtaining it I cannot imagine—had already done its work within ; she could not last more than seven or eight hours, and Baudret predicted that torpor would succeed the convulsions.

She implored the aid of her confessor, who came not. “ Your husband,” I said, “ has great confidence in one of the priests of this parish.”

“ My husband ! ” she exclaimed bewildered, “ You know that he is my husband ! he told you that I was—Great God ! forgive me ! forgive the crime that I have committed ! He told Madame de Créquy, his father’s friend.....He said that I was—why did I not know that he said so. Oh ! God of mercy ! how have I mistrusted your goodness ! forgive my blindness ! forgive my ig-

norance, my want of confidence!—and Monsieur, Madame?”

“He is as ill as you are.”

“Oh! so much the better! We shall meet the sooner! Look at those papers,” said she, pointing to two letters, the hand-writing of which I should recognise among a thousand, and I shall never recall their contents without horror and dread.

The first (of the earliest date) was an insidious note, moderate in its terms, in which the precautions, the prudence, and all the proper conduct of a young Prince, *whom they dared not name before the adorable Mme. de Saint Paër*, was perverted and represented in perfidious colours, as being the certain marks of an inconstant nature, of a volatile heart and of an inevitable breach, against which it was necessary and prudent to prepare herself.

In the second letter, written two days afterwards, mention was made, most insolently, of the amours of the Prince de Lam-

balle with Madame V... de F..., and God knows what abominable lies were invented in support of this calumny ; *

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the whole of this letter was written in a most impudent and cynical style, but it was evident, from the familiar tone and also the details of certain localities, that the anonymous author must have been one of the guests at Mousseau ; the cloven foot displayed itself.

The Vicar of Sceaux arrived—"Do not leave me," exclaimed Mme. de Saint-Paër, perceiving that I was going to quit the room, "Stay, Madame, pray remain by my bedside, close to me ! let me not die deserted ! I shall die all alone ! Ah ! stop, you can hear my confession !

"*Ma bonne Geneviève*," said I, my tears blinding me, "I must return to Paris ; I can assure you, that you will see me again ; and I trust that I shall not return alone."

“Geneviève ! Geneviève ! do you not recollect my voice ?” (This was after an absence of an hour and a half, and the patient had fallen into a narcotic sleep, immediately after having received absolution.)

“ Here is the Duc de Penthièvre. He said to me, “ What ! the wife of my son, my poor child, my beloved son !—Let us fly to Clamart, I must see and bless his wife !”

“ His wife !” she murmured between her lips, but without giving utterance to any word ; but as I felt assured that she had not yet lost all consciousness, and that she would not be insensible to these words of consolation : “ Here is the Duc de Penthièvre,” I repeated ; “ he is close to you !”

She then opened her eyes ; she could not see at first ; but raising painfully her heavy eye-lids, her glance fell upon the diamond hilt of M. de Penthièvre’s sword, which glittered in a ray of sun-shine ; she smiled with sweetness, and said to him :

“ How have I deserved this ?—Forgive me,

Monseigneur !—Your son !—” and that was all that the dying Geneviève could say.

“ My son ? has he not chosen you as his companion in the presence of God ? Have you not received the blessing of the Father of the universe ? I bless you, my daughter !—I will pray with you, and for you.”

She yielded up her spirit, before he had risen from his knees ; and from the beauty, openness, and serenity of her face, you would have said she died of joy.

Geneviève Galliot, whose portrait I hope you will always preserve, is buried in the collegiate church of Dreux, by the side of the mother of the Prince de Lamballe, Marie-Thérèse d’Est de Modene.

Every time I go to Montceaux, I never fail to stop at Dreux, to go and pour out my prayers in her behalf, in the church of Saint-Etienne.

The illness of M. de Lamballe was long and painful ; but the convalescence of the unhappy Prince was longer and more painful

still ; he came out as gold from the crucible, purified, solid ; and his resignation was equal to his grief. In deference to the wishes of his father, and the solicitations of his sister, and from condescension to my advice perhaps, he determined on marrying Mademoiselle de Carignan. Fatal alliance, and ill-omened fêtes ! I shall always see in that chapel of the Hôtel de Penthièvre, which was splendidly decorated for the occasion with thousands of lustres, flowers, and rich hangings of embroidery ; I shall always see the handsome figure of the Prince de Lamballe, with tears in his eyes ; the two families looking on in wonderment, and the young girl weeping, on account of the bride-groom's sadness. He did not look paler, nor more *undone*, as the expression is, after his death, which took place a short time after his marriage. I shall tell you none of the rumours that were circulated on this subject, because I have promised myself never to speak rashly of the Duke of Orleans. Madame de Lam-

balle possessed beauty, benevolence, and even virtues. You will see that her gentleness and goodness could not soften the tigers, who tore her to pieces on the altar of **EGALITE** !

CHAPTER XIII.

Ill assorted matches—Rotisset the Cook—Madame Roland de la Plattière—The pride of little-great people—A man of wood—Republican manners—The tables turned—Sainte-Pélagie.

THE first piece of scandal that I can think of with regard to *mésalliances*, was the marriage of a young Monsieur de la Bédoyère with an Italian singer, who, beyond that, was a respectable person, named Agathe Sticoti. The relations appealed against the validity of this unequal match, but the young man defended himself so ably and so well

that those who heard him were almost surprised into wishing him success. (As for Madame de Marboeuf and I, we blushed for the whole affair.)

It was a trial with which all France and even Europe resounded for many years ; and Voltaire declared that the King of Prussia wished to write to the Parliament of Brittany in favour of M. de la Bédoyère, whom he had recommended to the notice of his minister at Paris, and on whom he had bestowed a chamberlain's key.

The young man felt, and very rightly, that this was the worst passport he could have had to magistrates of Brittany, for they liked neither philosophy, nor calvinists, nor the friends of Voltaire, and philosophical Kings still less.

Mademoiselle de Mazzarelli, a friend of Messieurs de Moncrif and Saurin, had just carried off a prize at the *Académie Française* for an eulogy on Descartes, when we heard that she was going to be married to the Marquis de Saint-Chamond, one of the

house of Vieuville, and nephew of the husband of my aunt. It caused a great stir and gave rise to furious hostility, but I would not participate in it in any way. She was a respectable and clever woman, and except that she had neither birth nor fortune, there was nothing to be said against her. It is not true that she had behaved ill before her marriage ; no one could have lived on better terms than she did with her husband ; she brought up her two children perfectly well, and for finished tact and the art of playing her part of great lady with the utmost grace, there never was such a woman !

She had not been presented of course, and one Pentecost Day she went with her two children to the gallery of Versailles to see the procession of the Chevaliers of the St. Esprit pass by ; I saw in a window a woman quite alone, richly and beautifully dressed, wearing as much *rouge* as a Princess, so distinguished in appearance, and with such noble, animated, and expressive features, that I had no eyes except for her. Two lovely

children in the row behind us, turned constantly to look at her, and I asked their mother their name. As soon as I heard that she was Mme. de St. Chamond, I begged her to come and sit on our bench on the first row.

“I am very well placed here,” was her reply.

“But you will be better in this row.”

“I am not certain of that.”

“But why not?”

“Madame, since you do me the honour to question me, I must tell you that I dare not approach so near the King.”

“Well, I will be your chaperone.”

She looked down and answered with cold and rather proud politeness.

“I cannot come near the King, madame, and I feel obliged to tell you as my reason, that my husband was compelled to leave the regiment of which he was the Colonel in order to marry me.”

“Come all the same, my cousin! you are not required to carry the Queen’s train!”

“ Ah !” she cried, “ I am certain you are Madame de Créquy ! I have already to thank you a thousand times for having had the goodness to take my part at Choisy, before their Majesties. The Duc de Nivernais told me.....”

“ Never mind, but take this place by my side ; between women of respectability and people of talent there should be but the hand,” said I, and presenting mine to her I led her towards Madame de Tessê, who made room for her between us, and treated her with great politeness.

I found her brilliant, sensible, and unaffected, but when the King passed, our hearts beat, for he looked at our neighbour and then at Monsieur de Beauvau, who immediately whispered something to him. “ Marquise de Saint Chamond,” said his Majesty. “ I am very happy to see you.”

I was deeply touched at this proof of his goodness, and the poor woman shed tears of joy. She has lived for the last several years

on her husband's estates which we have both regretted.

Another *mésalliance* of which I must tell you, was that of the Comte de V— with Mademoiselle Julie Simonnet, nicknamed Philis ; she had been an opera dancer ; her father was an attendant on the sick at the Hotel-Dieu ; her mother sold mousetraps, and her sister was a rope-dancer.

Her idiot of a husband fancied that an income of a hundred thousand *écus* must ensure public approbation and popularity, but it was in vain that he gave balls and masquerades, concerts, with Italian singers, and Apicius-like suppers ; it only made him more absurd so it was magnificence entirely thrown away.

This woman had an extraordinary scene with the President d'Hozier, herald to the nobility of France, and the cause was this : she had had her husband's arms put upon her carriages and (to be like all the rest of the world) she joined to them some that she meant for her own. As it happened, she

had fixed upon those of the Messieurs de Mauléon, who were people of rank in the Duchy of Guyenne.

They went to law with her, and every time that the Countess Philis ventured to drive out in a carriage with double quarterings (the President d'Hozier had her watched) they made her get out in the middle of the street, however dirty it might be, and walk on the king's highway!

They took the carriage of this Countess to a public yard, and confiscated it without the slightest opposition; besides the fines which they made her pay for this heraldic misdemeanor, her carriages had cost her nearly twenty thousand crowns within the year. In order, as she said, that she should not look like an incorrect person in a lord's carriage, she bethought her of the plan of putting the arms of her husband in a spinster's lozenge, and the Herald was at last compelled to allow that he was completely beaten.

Whilst on the subject of unequal matches, I must tell you that my uncle, the *Com-*

mandeur de Froulay, had once a very remarkable cook, who being a great thief had become exceedingly well off; but it was not on this wise that he had earned his fame; he had invented delicious novelties, particularly his *pattes d'oie botteés à l'intendante*, (*sautees* with the fat of quails and fried in bread crumbs.) My uncle always advised the addition of the juice of a Seville orange, but his head cook was thrown into despair and was quite indignant at such a notion, because he declared that acids always softened such dishes and spoilt their appearance when fried.

You can choose between the recipe of the Commandeur and his cook.

This clever provider of good things was called *Rotisset*, and we had won him in a bet which my uncle had with the Maréchal de Saxe, who had sent him to us bound hand and foot! He was drowned in tears when he arrived at Chambord; and had even had the bad taste to think of rebelling; but as he was threatened with being sent to Saint-

Lazare, he ended by quietly accepting the wager.

I am sorry to own that the name of Rotisset was only his official designation, for he had no real patronymic, inasmuch as before he entered the kitchens of Chambord, he had left the dining-hall of the Foundling Hospital.

He ended however by marrying the sister of Mlle. Dupont, my head waiting-woman, and since then your nursery-maid ; but the Duponts, who are affluent and very respectable people of Maine, were at first mortally annoyed at such a bad match.

However their first child, Mlle. Fanchon Rotisset, married very suitably a working jeweller of the name of Flipon.

You will think I am mad in thus unravelling this genealogy like the chain of a spit ; but a little patience and you will see, *mon Prince*, why I have traced the line of the Rotisset's and the Flipons.

To make my preface more clear I will first tell you that M. Dupont, my secretary,

and valet, as well as Mme. Dupont his affectionate wife, had always something to relate, to the honour and glory of Manon Flipon, who was the daughter of the jeweller ; and who, if they were to be believed, was a perfect prodigy.

I remember that they talked of her marrying the butcher who served the Hôtel de Créquy, which butcher actually took it into his head to write to me on the occasion. The two Duponts were wild in their endeavours to explain this in a satisfactory and respectful manner, but I gave them to understand, that they must be quiet for the future about their amiable niece, and that I insisted on hearing no more of Manon Flipon.

One or two years passed—and the Duponts could bear it no longer ; they could not refrain from speaking to me of their niece's marriage, and requested that I would have the goodness to sign the contract, which I promised, without hesitating a moment, as it was always the custom of the

Messieurs de Créquy, to do so for such of their people as were not in livery ; and this even extended to their relations.

There was some misunderstanding about the day and hour when I was to sign my name ; I was at Versailles or I know not where. They were, however, quite content to have the said contract signed by your lady mother and my son, so I thought no more about it, when Dupont came to entreat me to grant an audience to Mme. Roland de la Plattière.

“ Who is she ? and what does she want with me ? ”

“ But Madame, it is Manon Flipon, who has married a gentleman of the *Bureau de Commerce* at Lyons ; a splendid situation with a good four thousand *livres* a year in farms, and a country house in the Forez. As Madame did not sign their contract, my niece thought that perhaps Madame would have the kindness—”

“ Ask her to come in ; I will see her.”

Madame Roland de la Plattière was the

most beautiful woman possible. She had a good figure and carriage, was perfectly well-dressed, and her manners were elegant and modest. Her face dazzled with its freshness and brightness, as if it had been a nosegay of lilies and roses, (I beg pardon for making use of so worn-out a simile, but I know of none so exact, and by the way, he who first declared that there were no roses without thorns, made an excellent remark.) The shape of her face was a beautiful oval, and her features were perfectly regular. Her eyes—such blue eyes!—had black eye-brows and long black lashes, with a profusion of brown hair. The amiability of her expression did not always correspond with the regular beauty of her countenance; there was at times something in the movements of the eyebrows and the mouth, discontented, malicious and even sinister.....When I had signed the contract which she had brought me, and found she did not go, I guessed that she had something to say and offered her a seat; but as she would have been mortified to see me ring for Dupont (her uncle) to

place her a chair, I rose and approached the arm chairs, saying, " Sit down, I beg, *mon enfant*."

This lovely young creature instantly saw the delicacy of my motive, and looking at me with eyes full of feeling, she answered in passionate and energetic tones :

" You are kind, *Madame*, really good and generous ;" and so saying, she gave one bound, like a gazelle, to the other end of the room, in order to seize on a stool, which in one jump, she brought back, and seated herself on it, in front of my sofa.

What she wished to ask me was, to help her to obtain letters of nobility for her husband, who possessed, as a commoner, a small estate giving the title of La Platière, held of the chatellerie of Beaujeu, of which Monsieur le Duc d'Orleans was lord, in right of his being Comte de Beaujolais.

All the citizens of Lyons were wild to be ennobled, and they resorted to every possible expedient to sustain their genealogies.

Madame Roland next next gave me to understand, with some importance and a toss of

her head, that it was possible that her husband's family might be descended from the Maréchal de la Plattière ; this assertion seriously damaged her case with me. I told her that the family name of this Maréchal was Bourdillon, and not Roland ; and when she saw that I received her chimerical supposition with coldness and perhaps incredulity, the expression of her face changed to one of bitter hatred and wounded pride which I shall never forget. I bowed her out discreetly and politely enough I thought ; but I said to her uncle Dupont, that Madame de la Plattière must be jesting ; that her husband was too highly descended to require being ennobled, but that he had only to show his proofs, &c.

I was some years without having any further communication with the Roland family. I must now diverge a little into the revolutionary times.

At the period of that odious and stupid affair, our trial by the citizen Bourbon-Montmorency-Créquy, of whose property I was accused of possessing myself, and in

other ways ill-using him, I resolved to go and see his protector and friend the citizen Roland on the subject, and I found him most determinedly hostile and savagely ill-disposed towards us. He presented the most rugged unapproachable front that I ever encountered : I can hardly call him a man of iron, for he was deficient both in solidity and utility ; he was a man of wood, but of that sort that turns the hatchet's edge.

Madame Roland entered the room of this strange minister, being informed of my presence by the excellent Dupont whose respect and fidelity towards me have never wavered. The expression of this woman's face was one of triumphant irony, ill-concealed by her few words of cordiality and consideration, to which I would not in any way respond ; this you will easily believe, for it is pretty well known I never could dissemble and I never would.

Mme. Roland still retained her good looks, but her manners and her language struck me as having become very vulgar, and ridiculously affected. It is a tone that she must

have acquired from her revolutionary connection and in her *girondines* intimacies ; for she certainly had it not some years before, or at least she had the proper vanity to be aware of it, and to control, and not express herself in this way before a person of good taste.

“ So this is the wife of a republican minister !” said I to myself. A revolution is a rapid descent. In politeness and the ways of the world Madame Roland was as far off from Madame Necker, as Madame Necker was from the Duchesse de Choiseul ; picture to yourself what the wife of the minister of justice, the *citoyenne* Danton must be, who looked up to Madame Roland as a complete aristocrat, a sort of Princess !

From the tone they adopted in speaking of this wretched adventurer, that is to say, the man who had denounced me, I saw that there was no hope of justice for me from such people ; so I contented myself with telling them coldly and dryly, that if the nation confiscated my property, it would never be available for an impostor whom it was so easy to expose, as the citizen Bourbon-

Montmorency-Créquy, otherwise called Nicolas Bezuchet, their *protegé*. I smiled maliciously when I contemplated their silly arrogance, their utter insufficiency to govern any country, more especially such a country as France! We parted, each looking displeased with the other.

“ I wish you good morning, *citoyenne*,” said the minister in a voice that disgusted me, and as he did not make even the semblance of showing me to the door, I was obliged to open it for myself. His wife avoided any low familiarity, but she was careful not to compromise her personal dignity and that of the French republic by showing any condescension to a *Fanatic* (that was my principal crime in their sight). She rose majestically, with a gesture of something like Roman civility, a movement of the head and eyebrows, and that was to pass for a bow !

Four months after this, we were prisoners together at Sainte-Pélagie !

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